

Life More Abundantly

“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” (NKJV)

Introduction

Messiah came to give us life—abundant life—*“life in its fullest measure”* (CJB). What exactly does this mean? Does this mean that we will have everything we want plus more? Does Scripture say anything about living an abundant life? Let’s look at the writings of *John*, where the concept of life (Hebrew **חַי**, *chai*) is mentioned 36 times. Revelation uses it 17 times, 1 *John* 13 times (66 total!), all three written by *John*, the disciple of *Yeshua*.

Why would *John* spend so much time on this idea? Perhaps the Spirit revealed to him that true life and intimately knowing *Yeshua* are the same thing. *John* remembered *Yeshua* praying before His *talmidim*: *“And eternal life is this: to know you, the one true G-d, and him whom you sent, Yeshua the Messiah.”* (*John* 17:3). When *John* wrote about life, he linked it 17 times with the word eternal—a word that undoubtedly refers more to the kind of life than its duration. It is the life of G-d shared with His people, therefore both imperishable and blessed.

Eternal life, then, is our future hope as well as our present reality; because when we put our faith in *Messiah*, eternal life begins for us (*“Yes, indeed! I tell you that whoever hears what I am saying and trusts the one who sent me has eternal life—that is, he will not come up for judgment but has already crossed over from death to life!”* (*John* 5:24). We won’t know its full glory until we are with the L-rd and delivered completely from sin at last. But we can surely have a taste of it now, and that sweet savor keeps us hungering for more.

Yeshua, the L-rd and Giver of Life

Who gives this precious gift of life? *Yeshua* who is Life Himself, *John* testifies:

In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. (1:4)

Just as the Father raises the dead and makes them alive, so too the Son makes alive anyone he wants (5:21)

Yeshua answered, “I am the bread which is life! Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever trusts in me will never be thirsty. (6:35)

Yeshua spoke to them again: “I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light which gives life.” (8:12)

He said to her, “I AM the Resurrection and the Life! Whoever puts his trust in me will live, even if he dies.” (11:25)

Yeshua said, “I AM the Way—and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me.” (14:6)

But these which have been recorded are here so that you may trust that Yeshua is the Messiah, the Son of G-d, and that by this trust you may have life because of who He is. (20:31)

In a sovereign act of his grace and mercy, *Yeshua* bestowed life upon us—and He endowed it plentifully (in abundance). The Greek word translated *“abundantly”* is the word *perissos* (*per-is-sos*’ Strong’s 4053) meaning superabundant (in quantity) or superior (in quality); by implication, in excess. The KJV translates it as: exceeding abundantly above, more abundantly, advantage, exceedingly, very highly, beyond measure, more, superfluous, vehemently. In the passage, the relationship between *Yeshua*, the Good Shepherd, and His sheep is marked by the desire and pleasure of the shepherd to give His sheep not just enough, but plenty. This is expressed in the TNK in Psalm 23 and also in Ezequiel 34. Did you catch that? The L-rd’s desire and pleasure is to lavish His loving care on His sheep—to give us *“abundant life in its fullest measure.”*

What Abundant Life Is and What Abundant Life Is Not

Sometimes the only way to fully grasp something is to compare it to what it is not. Let us sketch out some facts about the nature of this life in its fullest measure and then determine what it is not.

What It Is

- ◆ **Eternal:** The source is eternal, because *Yeshua* Himself is eternal (John 1:1-2) and He conquered death (John 14:6; 10:17; 11:25), and therefore the life He gives us is everlasting life. *John 3:15-16* “*So that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life For G-d so loved the world that he gave his only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed.*”
- ◆ **God-Made:** *Yeshua* is the One who brought everything into being (John 1:3, Hebrews 1:2) and made us God's children (John 1:12-13). He has taken the initiative toward us, and we have done nothing to contribute to this gift of eternal, abundant life (John 4:10).
- ◆ **Spiritual:** The abundant life is spiritual, not natural. It isn't something we're born with; it comes when we are born again (John 3:3, 5-6; 4:23-24). The life *Yeshua*, gives is an eternal dimension of living that is untainted by the sin of our human nature.
- ◆ **In Him:** As we saw in the verses from *John*, new life comes only through Messiah. *John* reiterated these thoughts in his first letter: “*And this is the witness: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Those who have the Son have the life; those who do not have the Son of G-d do not have the life.* (1 John 5:11-12)

What It Isn't

Luke sheds some light on what the abundant life is not: “*Then to the people he said, ‘Be careful to guard against all forms of greed, because even if someone is rich, his life does not consist in what he owns.’*” (Luke 12:15). Abundant life is not measured by: **Possessions, Income, Health, Status**. BTW, the so-called ‘*health and wealth gospel*’ is no gospel at all. It appeals to our human craving for comfort & starves us for provisions only Messiah can give.

What the Abundant Life Looks Like

Abundant life is the life for which we were created. When we have abundant life, we live in the light of the eternal realm that has already begun in us through faith in *Messiah*. We live out and live by heaven's values—the values of a world restored to perfection. In this world God ‘*will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, crying, or pain; the first things have passed away*’ (Rev. 21:4). What do these values look like? Scripture reminds us:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, self control. Nothing in the Torah stands against such things.” (Gal. 5:22-23)

“For this very reason, try your hardest to furnish your faith with goodness, goodness with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, self-control with perseverance, perseverance with godliness, godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.” (2 Peter 1:5-7)

To live abundantly is to be ever aware of the desire and the power God has lavished on us (Eph. 1:3-8a). It is to be rooted and grounded in the love He has showered on us (Eph. 3:17-20). It is to be anchored in the certain hope of His coming again and His consummation of all His plans (Rom. 15:13). To live abundantly is to make choices that reflect the reality of Messiah and His kingdom—to shape our present in light of our future. It is not an easy life, but it is the real life ... and it is the best life there could ever be.

Learning to Live Abundantly

What are some ways we can start living the abundant life today? The first and only place to start is by placing our faith & trust in *Yeshua*. Just knowing about Him and what He has said and done won't do. The Bible tells us that the demons know that *Yeshua* is G-d and fear Him (James 2:19). This kind of mental assent will not bring us life. Instead, we must put our **trust in Him**, we must decide to place our **faith in His life and death and resurrection**. Then His blood can supply the abundant life we lost at the Fall of man. When we trust Messiah in this way, we get Him inside our hearts where He can do some good. When we trust in *Yeshua*, we have at least four ways of living the abundant life.

- ◆ **Soar.** Live above the drag of fear, superstition, worry, and negativism by taking our needs to God.
- ◆ **Ignore.** Refuse to take our cues from those who operate from only the human perspective by listening to God's voice instead of the general public's.
- ◆ **Risk.** Break out of our comfort zones by trusting God to know more than we do.
- ◆ **Release.** Let go of our craving for control by allowing *Yeshua* to be in the driver's seat.

God never wanted us to run away from the world, to try to escape it like the monks sought to do. Instead, He wants us to engage our world—the to be in it but not of it. And the only way we can fulfill His desire is to enter into the abundant life He offers. Have you trusted Messiah as your Savior? If you haven't, that's the first place to begin. Pray now, won't you? God has loved you from the beginning of time and eagerly waits to call you His child and lavish His love on you. Repeat this prayer after me:

DEAR *YESHUA*: THANK YOU FOR DYING ON THE CROSS FOR MY SIN. I BELIEVE, TRUST AND HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT YOUR DEATH WAS MEANT TO BRING ME SALVATION. I PUT MY FAITH & TRUST IN YOU AS MY SAVIOR. THANK YOU FOR FORGIVING MY SIN & GIVING ME NEW LIFE—ABUNDANT LIFE.

If *Yeshua* is already your Savior, are you taking part in the abundant life He offers? If not, why not? Could it be that you are trying to live a *Messianic life* without much of the Messiah in it?

Give, and you will receive gifts—the full measure, compacted, shaken together and overflowing, will be put right in your lap. For the measure with which you measure out will be used to measure back to you!” (Luke 6:38)