

Let us Choose the Blessing

²⁶ “See, I am setting before you today a *blessing (b’racha)* and a *curse (k’lalah)* — ²⁷ the blessing, if you listen (*sh’ma*) to the mitzvot of Adonai your God that I am commanding you today, ²⁸ but the curse, if you do not listen (*sh’ma*) to the mitzvot of Adonai your God, but turn from the way I am commanding you today, to go after other gods you have not known. (Deut 11:26-28)

The month of *Elul* beckons, it begins tonight when the sun sets. *Elul* is the month of repentance in Jewish tradition. This week’s *Parasha* is *Re’eh*, which means to “Take a closer look.” The word shares the same root as the Hebrew *Pa’al* verb ‘to see’ (*Roeh*). It deals with the choices in a life devoted to His *Torah*, choices that bring life or ultimately bring death. In this *week’s reading* we are severely warned against idolatry in its various forms. We are also given instructions about the food we may or may not partake of, the *Shemittah* (sabbatical) years and reminded about the *moadim*. There are no shortcuts: we can choose life and blessing or cursing and death.

Do we need reminders? The Lord seemed to ask me ‘Tony, how well do YOU remember?’ As I read over the *Parasha* in preparation for this message, I found many such reminders. There are certain Scriptural presuppositions (hypotheses) that are at the core of our ministry. One prominent tenet is the desire to walk out (not just talk about) in His ways. Historically, KS people have been people of convictions, commitment and trust. We do not ‘nickel-dime’ one another in our affairs. We understand that *Adonai* is interested in the daily affairs of His people and He is much more than capable in overseeing all matters concerning His flock, which He purchased with His own Blood. But as *Elul* beckons we need (the Three R’s of Repentance) to remember, review and return to His ways in areas where we have digressed from His path due to the ‘cares’ (stress & influence) of this world. What are these presuppositions that guide our congregation and community in its path toward establishing a foundation of many godly generations?

Kol Simcha Presuppositions

I. Concerning Adonai

- All Scripture is profitable and valuable for walking in His ways: “¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for restoration, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the person belonging to God may be capable, fully equipped for every good deed” (2 Tim 3:16-17).
- The Father (*Abba*), the Son (*Yeshua*) and the Spirit (*Ruach Elohim*) DO NOT, CANNOT, AND WILL NOT CHANGE, (Eccl 3:14-15), (Mal 3:6), (Heb. 13:8), (James 1:17).
- Messiah *Yeshua* is *HaTorah* (the Word) made flesh (John 1:14).
- Throughout His life *Yeshua* provided many examples of how to walk in the Father’s ways (Luke 2:52), He demonstrated: **Attentiveness, Obedience, Wisdom, Truthfulness, Loyalty, Patience, Gratefulness, Deference, Humility, etc.** All things work together for good in order to conform us to the image of His Son (*Ro. 8:28-29*). If we lack character, it is revealed immediately in our attitude.
- The Power to live the lifestyle comes from His Grace: Grace is the desire and the power *Adonai* gives us to do His will (1 Cor. 15:10), (Titus 2:11), (Eph. 2:8,9), (Phil. 1:2; 2:13), (Heb. 12:15), (Jas. 4:16)
- **Biblical Standards Grow Out of: Scriptural Principles, Godly Character, His Grace, and Scriptural Disciplines.** Our humanistic society reacts harshly to these standards, but God’s Wisdom is better than weapons of war (Eccl. 9:18) and KS is a congregation striving to be part of His standard.

II. Concerning His Congregation

- In His sovereignty, He has gifted His flock and its members individually. In particular, He has given each person one of seven motivational gifts detailed in Romans 12. If every member has 1 basic motivational gift, we are not all gifted alike nor do we have identical points of view. The normal state of affairs in a congregation is that one’s point of view will be shared by 14.28% (1 out of 7) and 85.72% will have a different point of view (6 out of 7).

- Marriage is a **Blood Covenant (B'rith) and NOT a Contract**
- Marriage is the union (*echad*) of the **spirit, soul and body of one man with one woman**
- There are Scriptural guidelines for sexual intimacy in marriage
- The **home (and not the synagogue)** is the center of Messianic Life
- There is a **brutal war against children**: Satan's Hidden Agenda: **To destroy Godly seed** - Gen. 3:15
- The stated goal of Humanistic Medicine is: "Controlling human fertility ... by birth control, abortion and sterilization ... people must come to want fewer children" (*The Health Care of Women*, McGraw-Hill, 1975)
- We must take **personal responsibility in medical matters**
- Five reasons why **some women do not want more children**: Abusive and Intrusive Birth Procedures, Rebellious children, Financial Pressures, Husband's Attitude Toward Children and Medical fears.
- **The Strength of a Family is in the Number of Children they Have** (Ps 127: 4-5)
- Education needs to be done primarily (**and whenever possible**) at home
- **Apprenticeship** is in many cases more valuable than a college degree

III. Concerning Finances in His People

- Financial **Freedom** is a goal for **EVERYBODY**
- People need to **stop robbing God in tithes and offerings**: (Mal 3:7-12; Deut. 12:11, 17-18; 14:22)
- There should be **NO DEBT** in the congregation, in business nor in the home
- Some business **partnerships are Un-Scriptural**
- **Co-Signing** of Loans is **Un-Scriptural**

In the month of Elul: The 3 R's of Repentance are Remember, Review, Repent

- **Everyone Has Blind Spots** – We can **lovingly exhort** one another into good works (Luke 6:41-42).
- **We need to ask one another for our blind spots and receive correction in the spirit of Adonai**. We have asked the congregation over the years to point out our blind spots – will you extend to us the same courtesy (to point out your blind spots)?
- **God will not change His standards for our situations**. We need to strive to do things God's way no matter what the price. Do not expect God to give an answer in prayer for something He has already specified in Scripture. We need to pray: "*Lord, give me the grace to do Thy Will*" (Matt. 26:39, 42, 44)
- *The Torah of Adonai is Perfect restoring (converting) the Soul (Psalm 19:8)*