In our last Podcast we began with the Preface and the first part of the introduction to **Yahweh according to Job, the Warning**. Let's pick back up with the Introduction where we were talking about the means which God uses to get our attention and to give us the opportunity to be saved from ourselves, from all those parts of us that fight against Him being our **Adonai** (our Lord), our one and only **I AM**. To start, let's revisit the Lesson of the Heavenly Realms 1.

Lesson of the Heavenly Realms 1

By means of suffering Yahweh rescues those who suffer. For He gets their attention through adversity.

By way of example, as recorded in ***2 Chronicles 12:8***, **Yahweh** decided to hand over the nation of Israel to Shishak, the ruler of Egypt. He said, "*But they will become his slaves so that they may learn the difference between My service and the service of the kingdoms of the countries*." It may sound like God was being mean and vindictive, but perhaps we should consider a different perspective. What if God was choosing mercy. What if God was providing a pathway through which He might save their lives and the generations after them, to preserve their future both as a people and as a nation. He knew that if they continued in their course of blatant idolatry and religious pretense, His justice and His righteousness would have required Him to judge and destroy His own people.

Let's take this first lesson and apply it to our lives. God will allow us to endure great suffering at the hands of the enemy, to give us the opportunity to learn, if we *choose*, if we are *willing*, how living for the Kingdom of God is a far better decision than living for the "Me," or for the Kingdom of this World with all its religious pretense. He uses times of suffering to teach us who He is and who we truly are to Him. Or said another way, He uses times of suffering to teach us **WHY** we should choose to trust in Him and **HOW** to trust in Him. It is an ironic inversion, but suffering has the amazing ability to draw us to Him and secure us in Him.[1]

It seems that in difficult and dark times, God shatters our delusions of who He is, who we are, and all that we think our lives should be. In those terrible times, He gives us the opportunity, if we *choose* to be *willing*, to have the Spirit open our ears to His words and instructions.

Is God being mean? We find out at the end of Job that, like His dealings with Israel, God is trying to save our lives and the generations after us to preserve our future, both as a people and as a spiritual nation who calls on His name.

For example, through intense pain and the massive disruption brought about by my storm, God showed me something to which I had been blind for so long. He revealed to me the number of wounds in the deepest depths of my soul, which lay bare oozing with pus and maggots, wounds which I incurred at the earliest of ages and which were pressed on all throughout my life. Though great adversity, He also revealed to me many of the dysfunctional coping mechanisms I adopted in an ill-conceived attempt to protect myself from further harm, whether from God or man. Many of these coping mechanisms became

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[1] ***Romans 5:3-5; Philippians 1:29; James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6-7, 4:12-13, 5:10; Hebrews 12:11***

part of my being and functioned so naturally that I never knew they were manufactured, created, in response to my trauma.

To my surprise, I discovered that my armor, my whole internal system of self-protection, was built from layers and layers of wrong belief about God as well as a healthy dose of blatant unbelief, all of which was a hyper-reaction to the pain buried deep within my limbic system (the fight or flight mechanism of my brain). It was all in response to my lack of understanding of God and His reason for the events He directed for my life.

In short, God used the storm to teach me why I was in desperate need of Him and why I was completely powerless to heal myself from all these wounds. He used the storm to show me where I had clung to religion as a tool to navigate and make sense of the traumas of my life and, quite frankly, to make sense of Him. After all, religion gave me the if/then God with all its wonderful rules to follow (that was me being sarcastic). On the surface, this if/then God made sense, but he always rubbed me raw. If I was good, I would be blessed and if I was bad, then I had better watch out. Was that really our God? What ever happened to the light burden and the easy yoke that supposedly comes with following Him?[2]

God also showed me that as much as I professed to live by faith, there were deep areas of my soul that were not surrendered to His majesty, but rather to my pain, my shame, and my fear. To my chagrin, He even showed me how I consciously and subconsciously covered and hid my pain, my shame, and my fear with a cloak of personal goodness. My goodness was my beautiful thick armor of protection that I kept polished and shiny.

Then, like the two-part devastation in the story of Job, there was more to come in my life. The storm accomplished a lot, but God was not done. There was more that He wanted me to know about Him and about who I am to Him. Even though I learned so much through my storm, these "revelations" were not enough; they needed to be affixed within the DNA of my soul, and there was so much more to learn about **Yahweh** and who I am to Him.

The truth about God, the truth about who I am to God, the truth about my abject neediness for Him in all things all the time, the truth about my wounds, the truth about all the dysfunctional coping mechanisms I adopted because I did not trust Him or understand His love, had to become affixed into every aspect of my being: my heart, mind, soul, and strength. Therefore, a few years after the storm seemed to come to a quiet still, He once again mercifully warned me of another huge wave that would come crashing down on my life. He said:

> "I have a lesson to teach you. A lesson that can only be found in stillness and in waiting. This is going to be hard. Very hard. But it is safe and will accomplish my beautiful purposes. You have been carrying a heavy load, and I want to make it lighter. Trust me. Pick up your mat and walk. Pick up your shield and fight. My banner over you is sturdy and is a shade from the heat. I want to take care of you, and I want others to take care of you in the most practical of ways. Again, I know this is going to be hard. I know the way I have wired you and the way I have carved you, and like King David and the many lessons and layers I took him through in his reign as King (and before), so I am doing with you. Steve, I am preparing you for the strike when Satan's thumbprint will be pressed

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[2] *See **Matthew 11:29-30***

upon your forehead. You can trust Me. Go before the Council and I will grant your request. The time has come, and the time is now."

There are many, many aspects to this message, but I want to point out a few. This extremely difficult time was going to be about my learning a very hard but important lesson that could only be found in stillness and in waiting. He assured me that it was all safe and that it would accomplish His beautiful purposes. Therefore, no matter what was going to go down, I could be confident it was not about my being "bad," and my being punished for sin (the typical fears that come with the if/then God who is a distortion, a misrepresentation **Yahweh**). Honestly, despite this beautiful word, at first it sure felt like punishment for my being bad, and the enemy constantly told me it was about punishment. After all, through others I was literally being punished.

Thankfully, He had given me this message, and I was able to use it to distinguish the voice of **Yahweh** from the voice of the enemy, who parades around as the if/then God, the voice of others that was laced with judgment and condemnation, and the voice of my own internal mechanisms that thrive on guilt and shame.

In His mercy towards me, God made it clear, once again before anything happened, that He would accomplish three beautiful purposes in my life: 1) He would lighten my load; 2) He would take care of me and have others take care of me in the most practical of ways; and 3) He would prepare me to stand against the enemy in a way I had yet to face—the time when Satan's thumbprint would be pressed upon my forehead (which is in an ill-fated attempt to mark me for his own).

God assured me that I could trust Him, that it was safe, which meant I did not need to fear. I was fully provisioned in advance for this journey. I could pick up my mat and walk in healing, by not choosing to live in fear and hopeless despair, as if I was permanently broken or a victim to others and to my circumstances.

I also had a weapon with which to fight my enemy, a shield of faith (notice, He intentionally did not direct me to carry a sword, which I would have preferred). By mentioning this shield, He was indicating that my fight was coming to me, I did not need to go and look for it, and my part in this fight was not offensive. I needed this shield of faith to hold back every onslaught so that I could remain standing in Him, never retreating.

He also would provide a covering, a sturdy shade from the intensity of the heat of battle and from the heat of my circumstances (the banner of **Yahweh Nissi**). He also instructed me to go before the Council, the Great Assembly, and He would grant my request; but more on that later.

1 Corinthians 13:13

But now faith, hope, love {*agape*}, now abide these three; but the greatest of these is love {*agape*}.

If the storm God directed for my life was all about learning how to live in **faith**, and the "Lesson" has been about learning how to live in **hope**, then the next step is my learning how to live in His *agape* **love**.

Through great affliction, He showed me the fear that resided deep in my soul. A fear which was covered over and protected by my shame and my pain. At the deepest levels of my being, I found I was afraid of God and afraid of man; both of which are faith killers. This fear, obfuscated by all manner of religious nonsense, operated at such a deep subconscious level that it always kept me reactive and self-protected, rarely at rest and rarely vulnerable. As a result, my ability to consistently love with His *agape* **love** was hindered by my shame and by my fear.

In like manner, when wave after wave of destruction was constantly crashing over my life, it was very easy to live in despair and not in hope, to live with a sense of inevitable doom. It was depressing to say the least. This also hindered my ability to consistently love with His *agape* **love**.

To accomplish His beautiful purposes, God had to first teach me how to be still—how to compose and quiet my soul in rest, regardless of what was happening to me, or through whom it was happening.[3] He taught me how to practice believing in His name, **Yahweh**, and all the beautiful variants of His name: **Yahweh Tsidkenu** (**Yahweh** our righteousness), **Yahweh Shamah** (**Yahweh** who is there), **Yahweh Mekoddishkem** (**Yahweh** who sets us apart, or sanctifies us), **Yahweh Qanna** (**Yahweh** who is jealous), **Yahweh Jireh** (**Yahweh** our provider), **Yahweh Shalom** (**Yahweh** our peace), **Yahweh Yasha**, (**Yahweh** who saves), **Yahweh Raah** (**Yahweh** our shepherd), **Yahweh Nissi** (**Yahweh** our banner or rallying point), **Yahweh Rapha** (**Yahweh** our healer), **Yahweh Sabaoth** (**Yahweh**, the "Lord" of hosts, the "Lord" of heaven's armies), and **Yahweh Magen** (**Yahweh** our shield).

As I came to believe His name, stillness began to emerge within my being. I began to believe, really believe in the form of a mental and emotional acceptance, that I was safe, that God was not mean, that He was not cruel, and that all the pain, rejection, isolation, and division that He purposed for me was not about others being bad (they were just the tools He used), and it was not about my being bad, but it was all necessary for me to learn how to choose to live in freedom, released from the hardened shackles of shame and fear no longer enslaved to the masters of religion which had ruled my life.

I also had to learn how to wait in **hope**, and not in despair and disillusionment, as was my pattern of dealing with troubles. Learning to practice these two skills, stillness and waiting, was terribly difficult. But I came to understand that faith and hope are the building blocks of the kingdom of God, and one cannot abide in *agape* **love** (which is the true evidence of a person being "in Christ") unless they learn to live in **faith** and then in **hope**. These building blocks, stacked one upon another, provide the pathway to intimacy with **Yahweh**: faith, hope, and *agape* love.

In that regard, prior to this next wave, "the Lesson," crashing down upon my life, He spoke to me about **hope** and why He was needing to teach me to abide in hope. He said,

> "I have allowed this uncertainty for a reason. I want you to be absolutely bathed in Hope. There is more of Hope for you to know and experience - and ultimately more of Me. Ask me and I will show you. Believe that I want to show you and believe that I do not want to hurt you and cause you more pain. Every part of you belongs to Me and I treat My things with the utmost care. So, trust me. And hope. And hope some more. And hope even more after that, when you think you could not possibly hope even an ounce more. My dearest son, My hand has withheld for the sake of offering you so

[3] ***Psalm 131:2***

much more. Hope in abundance is what I have for you my sweet child. Wait patiently and with bold confidence."

To be bathed in hope, to wait patiently, and with bold confidence, is something that could only be accomplished if I was *willing* to bet my life on His name, **Yahweh**. Otherwise, the circumstances of the "Lesson," this massive wave, would be far too frightening and crippling. Thankfully, He once again assured me that His motives are not evil, vindictive, and His decision to let this wave wash over me is not about punishment. It is about having more of Him. He does not want to cause me pain, but unfortunately, pain is the necessary byproduct of the tools **Yahweh** employs in teaching such critical lessons. He did not want to cause me pain, but He had to cause me pain, it was necessary. And in His jealous love for me, **Yahweh Qanna** (**Yahweh** who is jealous) and **Yahweh Mekoddishkem** (**Yahweh** who sets me apart) would do whatever was needed to accomplish His beautiful purposes in my life.

For the longest time, I have known that He wanted me to learn to live in rest as I waited on Him with confident assurance, but it was not something within my own ability. As much as I tried to live free of my wounds, I simply couldn't. My fear, shame, and pain had far too much authority within my being, and they were buried deep in my soul beyond my ability to understand how they worked. I possessed no wisdom to discern what to do about them. Furthermore, the typical religious remedies, which are worthless, had been my go-to for far too many years. They always seemed to provide some relief from the pain, but it was very short lived and never brought about healing. Simply said, God wanted to purge them from my entire being, from my heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Honestly, it would be an understatement to admit that during my storm, I failed to learn how to "wait" in confident assurance upon **Yahweh**. I survived the storm, because He kept the boat afloat and kept me in the boat, but I did not learn to abide in rest, the believer's rest, spoken about in ***Hebrews 4:1-13***. In fact, for the most part, I loathed waiting, and I was not afraid to express my not so pleasant thoughts about waiting. This attitude, however, dishonored **Yahweh's** name, misrepresented His character, magnified the enemy, and it revealed how many aspects of His name I had yet to bet my life upon.

After this message about the "Lesson" was given to me, but before anything transpired, I had been on a trip with a very special and beloved group of people in the beautiful Rocky Mountains. God led us to this place to pray, a high ridge, the top of which looked like it had been burned. It was the kind of place that seemed appropriate for sacrifice.

On this mountain, as I prayed, I found that the Spirit of God led me to speak words that the Father was dying for me to speak, words of "*willingness*" that would give Him relational permission to do all that He desired in my life. God's nature of *agape* love does not force Himself upon us, but His love invokes our desire, our willingness to join Him in His desires for our life, to let Him be to us all that He says He is, our **I AM**.

I invited God to judge and remove anything within my soul that inhibited me from being a vessel of His *agape* love. I asked Him to reveal all the hidden enemies and places of resistance, so that He could conquer them, and I could live free to love. I asked Him to remove anything within me that fights against Him being my **I AM**, my source for all things all the time. I wanted to know His rest for real, and I gave Him the relational permission to do what He needed to do.

As the words came out of my mouth, I knew that God had heard my prayer and that it was a prayer that brought Him great delight. It was the prayer that would prepare me for the strike when Satan's thumbprint will be pressed upon my forehead. It was a prayer that sounded throughout the spiritual realms putting all on notice that I was finally *willing* to let **Yahweh** be my **I AM**.

Our time on the Mountain of Judgment (as we affectionately named it), and the prayer He led me to offer up in sacrifice, was an important step in preparing me for this Lesson of **hope**. God wanted me to willingly enter this time, for it would be deeply relational and intimate. This events of the "Lesson" would be the way He purposed for me to learn to live in hope and abide in His love, convinced of how much He loves me, confident that I am safe because He is the only true and permanent source of safety.

It should be noted that in my prior teachings, I rarely, if ever, discussed my life or intertwined my story. But in this instance, given the topic, I have felt led by the Spirit of God to bring you into my story, a tale that in many ways parallels the story of Job in terms of the lessons learned and the process by which God taught those lessons.

The Code

Throughout the Bible, the Spirit often communicates messages in numbers, colors, objects, phrases, and though language particulars, such as the tense, voice, mood, and case of a verb. The Spirit is always precise in His use of the **Code**, and it is by no means random, but the meaning of the **Code**, whether numbers, colors, objects, or phrases, is consistent across the Bible, whether Old Testament or New Testament.

Understanding the **Code**, helps us navigate all the books of the Bible for it gives us a plumbline to follow, by which we can make accurate connections through the various styles of writing in the Bible, be it in narrative form, poetic, legal, prophetic, etc.

In the study of the book of ***Revelation***, which can be downloaded at threshermediagroup.com, in the first chapter, you can find a relatively complete "toolbox" of the various elements of the **Code** and how the **Code** is to be used to understand what the Spirit now says to the churches. I encourage you to get familiar with **Code**, for it will be used in our study of Job, especially in the first and the last chapters.

With that said, in our next podcast, we will begin our study with ***Job 1:1***.