



Battleground by Paul Gasser, Elder, Etz Chayim-Tree of Life Messianic Congregation, Las Cruces, NM

Do not be afraid of them, for YHVH your Elohim, the great and awesome El, is in your midst. (Deut. 7:21 ISR98 – emphasis added)

Since most people in the Messianic walk come out of the Christian or Catholic churches, we have all most likely heard this next statement: “In the “Old Testament”, the Holy Spirit only rested upon God’s chosen people like Isaiah and Jeremiah. But now, after the death of “Jesus”, the Holy Spirit dwells in us.” This is a statement to help keep the separation of a Christian mindset and a Jewish one. How many believe such things today? I would bet most still struggle with this concept. If you just heard it for the first time, then you may struggle now.

In the above verse, the Hebrew word for ‘in your midst’ is “karev”. This word has many meanings...One of them means ‘heart’ AND “in, inward, inwardly, inward part, inwards, inward thoughts and within self”. If you put the two together, then it is “in your heart”. We are always talking about context, so place this understanding within the verse and you will see it flows even better than what is there. (midst, among, etc.)

So if God was in the hearts of His people while in the wilderness, then did God change when Yeshua died? Of course not. For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. (Mal. 3:6) So having the Spirit within you is not a new thing. What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. (Ecc. 1:9 ESV) Therefore, do not listen to teachings which continue the separation from Israel. If you believe in Messiah Yeshua, then you are grafted into Israel as a son. You become a part of Israel, with the same identity and access to the covenant with God.

The battle ground we face is that idea of something was different/new after Yeshua. Yeshua did not bring a new teaching, a new religion or a new way to 'salvation'. He came to seek repentance back to the way it was supposed to be. This was His number 1 teaching. Yeshua is a Jew, lived like a Jew and even confirmed that lifestyle by how He walked it out. Too many of us are still too opposed to changing our lifestyles to look like that. Sure we follow the feast days and show up to most Shabbat services during the day of Shabbat. Yet what about the smaller lifestyle changes which are less noticeable? We stumble here the most.

The only way the people were able to walk out the Torah correctly in the Tanakh, is when they had the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) dwelling within them. The same is true today. For it is the Job of the Ruach HaKodesh to cause us to walk in Torah. That is the true result of "Being in the Spirit". So do not be deceived by the false teaching the church brings forth about the Spirit of God. Search the Scriptures daily to show yourselves approved before God, not man.

Shavua Tov!