

Is Your Child Old Enough to Get a Cell Phone?

These days, kids are begging their parents for a cell phone. Whether they should have one or not is your job to decide.

But what factors should you take into consideration? Here are a few questions you should answer to figure out whether or not your child is old enough for a cell phone.

Need vs. Want

Is it a want or need?

These days, cell phones are a status symbol. Kids with the newest technology and the best games are seen as “popular” and “cool.” Your child might be trying to earn points with neat technology. But is that the purpose of a cell phone? The No. 1 reason kids get a cell phone is to stay in communication with their parents.

Working parents, busy schedules, bus dropoffs and after-school programs are legitimate conditions where a cell phone may be necessary. Practices could run late, and alternative arrangements may need to be made. But if your children are picked up and dropped off each day, there are other options available to stay in contact.

Make sure a cell phone is more of an emergency tool, not a social tool.

Responsibility

Is your child responsible enough to have a cell phone?

Each child is different. Parents know if kids are responsible with their belongings or if they are scatterbrained and prone to losing things. Their level of personal responsibility

should determine whether or not they have a cell phone. Evaluate your child's handling of present responsibilities. Do they complete their chores without being asked? Do they stay on top of their homework? Their actions with these small tasks are telling of their overall responsibility.

Perhaps they're not quite there yet. Make a pact with your child that once they demonstrate personal responsibility in other areas of life, they'll earn the responsibility of a cell phone. A specific plan can develop the skills your child needs before owning technological tools.

Pay attention to their level of responsibility, and if they're not ready, teach them.

Cost

What if my child runs up my cell phone bill? This is a legitimate concern!

Here's our advice: When phones have Internet access, parents are often surprised by the size of the phone bill. You can choose a basic phone without web access, but smartphones typically require Internet access. Consider the most affordable plan, and make sure your child is informed of its conditions.

Look into plans, then monitor and set restrictions.

Limits

Can you control their cell phone use?

We've all heard horror stories of \$700 dollar cell phone bills, inappropriate photos and bullying text messages ... even for young children. But could these issues have been avoided? As parents, we have the ability and obligation to ensure that technology is being used for good. Can you limit and track their cell phone use? Will they have a camera phone? Will there be an open text message policy? Can they have their

phone at night?

You have the ability to set limits. Create a cell phone contract! These restrictions could be negotiated over time once more responsibility is earned. By first enforcing these limitations, you will teach your children self-control.

Parents can use their limitations to teach self-control.

Tools

What tools are available to ensure responsible cell phone use?

As technology advances, more options and apps are available to empower parents. Tools like Find My Friends help you locate your child. Code9 is a paid-service that tracks children, limits usage and informs parents.

Even without downloading apps and purchasing subscriptions, parents can use cell phones as teaching tools. While there are many great educational apps, the cell phone itself teaches self-control, responsibility and communication skills.

Apps and the cell phone itself are tools for parents.

Effects

Don't cell phones cause cancer?

The idea that cell phone waves cause brain tumors was popular for years. But a recent study published in the *Journal of National Cancer Research*, explained here, reported "no link between rising cell phone use and rates of brain cancer." The researchers argued, "If cell phones were a significant cause of brain tumors after five to 10 years of usage, the incidence rates should show an acceleration in brain tumors relative to earlier trends."

Recent research shows no link between cell phones and brain tumors.

All Pro Dad is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a byproduct, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include daily emails, blogs, Top 10 lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From , fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **Instagram**.

For the original article, visit .

Grant Berry: Making Israel Envious, Part 2

In Part 1 of this article, I emphasized exactly what it is in us that will help to draw Jewish people to jealousy, and I would encourage you to read it to help get the full picture from both of these articles.

It is indeed our own intimate and personal relationship with the G-d of Israel that can make Jewish people jealous, especially when they see the intimacy and sincerity we have in our faith as followers of Yeshua/Jesus. As you further develop your friendship with your Jewish friends or neighbors, they may also see and witness the two-dimensional aspect of our relationship with G-d in how He communicates back to us, which is completely foreign to most Jews and especially secular Jews. I can tell you, as a Jewish believer, that my people do not yet have this kind of intimacy with G-d, because they have not yet accepted Yeshua and come into the New Covenant (see

Jer. 31:31-34).

Speaking generally, they are either ultra-orthodox and follow an extremely legalistic code or are secular Jews holding on to their traditions because they have rejected the first option. But who can blame them for that? Their own religion promotes such a ritualistic code and experience that controls their every movement, which can be extremely stifling for anyone to consider.

So, when you have opportunity to demonstrate your relationship with G-d, whether through prayer or some other circumstances that will help show your connection to G-d, you should jump at the opportunity. Whether they tell you or not, they will become curious by it, and it will impact them and further demonstrate the sincerity of your faith and your spiritual connection to G-d.

However, there are two other major factors that can make a huge difference in the way we communicate our faith toward Jewish people, and the first is how we present it. Please understand that Jewish people see Christianity as a totally separate religion, when in reality this could not be further from the truth. In fact, if Christ is G-d, then both believing and following Him is the only true and proper extension of Judaism, as Yeshua emphasized (see John 4:22) and the apostles themselves discovered, for Christianity is Jewish (see Rom. 11:16-24).

But when Rome took control of the church in the fourth century, Christians disconnected themselves from their Jewish roots and the church became quite Gentile in its approach, no longer wanting to have anything to do with its Jewish past except to see themselves through Israel's covenants and Scriptures.

As a result, while we may have all good intentions in communicating our faith back to Jews in a normal Christian

manner that would be perfectly acceptable to another Gentile person, when sharing our faith with Jewish people, it isn't, and we run the risk of missing the mark of our calling to draw them to jealousy. We need to be making them envious that what we have actually also belongs to them, rather than presenting it as a separate faith.

Do you get my point here? When wanting to bring the gospel back to the Jewish people, we need to learn how to bring it to them in a reconnected manner that substantiates the Jewishness of the New Covenant, which was given to them by the L-rd before it was given to the nations.

Please do not misunderstand me here. I am not suggesting that we go back to the law, but rather reconnect spiritually to the roots of our faith, which will help us dramatically in how we share Yeshua. As a Jew, when I accepted the L-rd, I did not give up my Jewishness, but instead found its true path as well as its fulfillment in Christ.

It may help to think of that olive tree that the apostle Paul spoke of in Romans 11 to fully appreciate what G-d has done by grafting Gentile believers into a Jewish root, even though at present most of Israel is still broken off. Listen to what the apostle Paul says: "After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!" (Rom. 11:24).

If we approach Jews with the lingo of the Gentile branch, we should not be surprised that it is foreign to them, because they can only really begin to relate to it as it was intended, when it is presented back to them in a Jewish manner that will allow them to connect more naturally to their own root, which was how I was led to faith by my Christian friend.

The apostle Paul was a master at this, moving as a Jew to

reach Jews and moving as a Gentile to reach Gentiles. But what counted most was that the gospel went out in a way that it could more easily be received and accepted (see 1 Cor. 9:19-22).



The difference now, however, is that in order for us to be effective in reaching Israel, we need to reconnect our Christianity to its Jewish roots, especially as we enter this time of transition in the kingdom of G-d to bring in the fullness of the Gentiles and the spiritual awakening of the Jewish people (see Rom. 11:25-26).

We not only need to reach them, but also to connect with them as our spiritual family and see them by faith until they come in, which must take place before Jesus returns. That indeed, we would truly become one in the Spirit, all the children in G-d's family, as per Jesus' prayer in John 17. For ultimately, we will rule and reign with Israel after their spiritual redemption has taken place.

I believe this to be G-d's end time mercy plan to finally unite us, but who is going to reach them with the gospel and the love of G-d? (see Rev. 5:9-10). Will G-d do this on His own and without us? I don't think so, as He always uses man to bring about His purposes—read Hebrews 11.

Israel is like no other people in light of G-d's covenants and promises to them as His firstborn children. For these reasons alone, we should know their redemption is drawing near and that indeed we have a major role to play in order to reach them, which I will discuss in future articles.

The second major factor is that we need to gain a much deeper understanding of the things that now keep Jewish people separate from their own Messiah. It is not just because their leaders rejected Christ, but much more now because of the horrible persecution that was bestowed upon them through

church and Gentile ancestry over the past 1,800 years. As a result, there are tremendous blocks in the bloodline for any Jewish person to believe in Yeshua, because of what has been done to their ancestry in the name of Christ.

You can read about my own story in how G-d helped me to overcome my resistance in my first book, *The New Covenant Prophecy*. This is why Jewish people have such an aversion to anything Christian and especially Christian symbols, as to them it reminds them of great suffering and torment.

While we may think that no true Christian would have done such things, which itself is another topic of discussion, this does not negate the Jews' perception of Christianity. It is really important for us to understand and grasp this, as in so doing it will help us to lovingly defuse these barriers in our witness toward them to help break them down, which the devil has been using to keep them from faith.

As a result, up to this point, except for the grace of G-d through a remnant, as well as His future timing to awaken Israel, belief in Yeshua has simply not been an option for Jewish people. This is one of the main reasons we must gain a better understanding of the past, in order for us all to find G-d's healing and reconciliation during these days, both Jew and Gentile alike. For neither group has been innocent here, but G-d's heart and plan is that He would use all of this to show His love and mercy on all of His children (see Rom. 11:28-32).

Simply put, Israel must be awakened, and the family of G-d must be connected; this is an essential part of G-d's plan to reunite His family upon the earth, so that Christ may return and take dominion of it. For us in the church to come into a greater understanding of our calling to win Israel back to faith, to arouse them with our own new covenant relationship with their G-d and for Israel to ultimately receive salvation—what an honor He has actually bestowed upon us in

the church!

In next month's exclusive article for Standing With Israel, I will help to equip you to improve your witness and connection toward the Jewish people.

Next two articles by Reconnecting Ministries:

- *The Dos and Don'ts of Jewish Evangelism*
- *End Time Roles*

Grant Berry is a Jewish believer in Yeshua/Jesus and author of *The New Covenant Prophecy and The Ezekiel Generation*. He has founded *Reconnecting Ministries* with the specific focus to help the church reconnect spiritually to Israel and considers it vital to the kingdom of G-d in the last days. His message focuses on the unity, love and healing that the Father wants to bring between Jew and Gentile yet clearly points out the differences and misunderstandings between the two groups. Now is the time to look more carefully into this mystery to make way for healing and reconnection in the Spirit. For more information, please visit .

Why Some Arabs Extol Israel's Virtues

A common fallacy in the Israeli/Arab conflict is that Israel is made up of Jews and Palestine of Arabs. The second part is correct, but Israel is only 75 percent Jewish. She is 20 percent Arab.

Yes, there are 1.5 million Israeli Arabs in our nation. They

are not Palestinians.

What is different about these Arabs is they possess all the rights and privileges as Israeli Jews, similar to the rights that most Western countries enjoy. Unlike in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria, they have freedom of speech, freedom of expression and freedom to travel. Just about the only thing that an Israeli Arab can't do that Israeli Jews can is serve in the Israeli Defense Forces—and some of them do that.

An Arab living in Haifa can go to the center of the city, hold a sign that says he thinks Prime Minister Netanyahu is stupid and then go home and enjoy his family. No one will arrest him. Ask the same Arab to move to Saudi Arabia and hold up a sign saying, "King Abdullah has the brains of a camel," and he wouldn't last 10 minutes.

Furthermore, Israeli Arab women can drive (unlike in Saudi Arabia). No one tells them what they can wear, but in many countries, women would be physically beaten by religious police for leaving the house in a T-shirt and jeans.

Israeli Arabs dress any way they like. Some dress in traditional Muslim garb. But many prefer Western clothes, and so far none of them have been arrested.

Beaten for Hair Gel

In Gaza, which was largely secular before it elected Hamas to rule there, teens can be beaten for using hair gel. On April 14 of this year, Ismail Halou was kidnapped by Hamas police. They pulled up to the gas station where he worked and snatched him, blindfolded him and took him to a police station.

They tied him down and beat the soles of his feet for five minutes. He cried in agony. He said it was the worst pain he had ever experienced. He couldn't walk for three days. What was his crime? *The use of hair gel*. They shaved his head and released him.

Israeli Arabs Don't Want to Leave

Many years ago we hired an Israeli Arab woman to help clean our house. I was driving her home one day and asked her if she would prefer to live in a predominantly Arab country like Syria. She looked at me like I was crazy. I don't know what she thought of Jews, but I sure know that she was happy to be living in Israel and not any of the Arab nations in the Middle East.

Where Are the Terrorists?

You would expect that some of these Israeli Arabs would be radicalized. It is a million times easier for an Israeli Arab to bring a bomb into a restaurant or bus than it is for a Palestinian because of the security fence. But there is something about freedom that changes a man. It appears that the overwhelming majority of radicalized Muslims come from oppressed states like Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran and the like.

Yes, there are exceptions, like the Boston Marathon bombers and the butcher in England. But for the most part, Muslims who live in areas where they have human rights do not blow themselves up.

Freest Arabs Are Here

After our service at Tiferet Yeshua Congregation yesterday, we took our guest speaker to a restaurant on the beach, right between Tel Aviv and Jaffa. There were hundreds of Israeli Arabs enjoying the beach, playing soccer and cooking deliciously seasoned meats *al ha'aish* (on the grill). All this, in a Jewish nation.

As I looked around, something I have said for years was confirmed: Israeli Arabs truly are the freest Arabs in the Middle East.

Ron Cantor is the director of Messiah's Mandate International in Israel, a Messianic ministry dedicated to taking the message of Jesus from Israel to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Cantor also travels internationally teaching on the Jewish roots of the New Testament. He serves on the pastoral team of Tiferet Yeshua, a Hebrew-speaking congregation in Tel Aviv. His newest book, *Identity Theft*, was released April 16. Follow him at @RonSCantor on Twitter.

For the original article, visit [.](#)

Why Counting Calories Doesn't Work

Many of us are still going strong with our New Year's resolution to lose those extra pounds, but we need to be smart in our decisions. We can get caught in the same trap, seeking out the "usual suspects" when we start a weight-loss program. The typical school of thought for losing weight is a matter of burning more calories than we eat. Unfortunately, that's not how it works!

There are too many people who are stuck on their same weight, even though they have been eating right and exercising. The reason is simple: They are not taking into consideration how stress and the hormones they produce control their metabolism.

Not All Calories Are the Same

We would like to think that when we burn calories, we are burning calories from stored body fat from around our waist

and bottom. That simply is not always the case. The body burns calories from either fats, carbohydrates or proteins (lean muscle). To assume that the body is always burning calories from stored body fat is simply wrong.

It's easy to say that a 30-minute jog burned 300 calories, but it doesn't tell us if we burned 300 calories from the breakdown of fats, carbs or muscle. We could have easily burned 300 calories from the breakdown of carbohydrates—or worse, we could have burned 300 calories from lean muscle tissue (protein), which is the last thing we want to do.

The body is designed to burn calories throughout the day from fats, as opposed to carbs and proteins. But most people who struggle with their weight are usually burning more calories from the breakdown of carbs and proteins, not fats. In other words, they are not staying in their “fat-burning zone” throughout the day. Yes, they are burning lots of calories, but they're not burning calories from stored body fat. It doesn't matter if you don't have any carbs in your system. Your body will then break down lean muscle.

The reason people aren't efficiently burning stored body fat has nothing to do with the amount of calories they ate or burned. It has more to do with what regulates their metabolism.

Hormones Regulate Metabolism

As we said before, the body can either burn calories from fats, proteins or carbs. Our metabolism is predominately controlled by our hormones. Some hormones burn fats, some hormones store fats, and some trigger our body to burn carbs and protein. So to automatically assume that the 300 calories you burned came from the stored body fat around your tummy and bottom is wrong.

The hormones we are talking about are cortisol, adrenaline, insulin and glucagon, which are stimulated by stress and diet.

Too much stress in your life will cause an overproduction of cortisol and adrenaline, which can trigger your body to burn carbs and proteins instead of fats. The same is true about insulin and glucagon. Too many carbs, and you produce more insulin, which stores fat, whereas glucagon burns fat and is produced when you eat protein.

The Calorie-Burning Test

So, how can you tell if you are burning carbs instead of fats throughout the day?

1. Do you struggle with cravings and low blood sugar?
2. Are you irritable if meals are missed or delayed?
3. Do you skip meals or only eat one or two meals a day?
4. Do you eat lots of refined, processed food and drink?
5. Do you have a hard time concentrating and staying focused?
6. Do you struggle with midmorning/afternoon slumps?
7. Do you have difficulty “staying” asleep?
8. Do you have to eat every few hours?

If you answered yes to a few of these questions, it is a good indication your body is constantly burning calories from carbohydrates and proteins instead of stored body fats.

Stay in Your Fat-Burning Zone

Here are some simple steps you can take to ensure your body is staying in its fat-burning zone throughout the day.

1. Examine the amount of stress in your life. If stress is constant, you could be producing too much cortisol and adrenaline, which is throwing your metabolism off. Take our online health quiz to see if stress is a problem. If you want to be more scientific, have your cortisol and DHEA levels measured through a saliva test to determine if stress is impacting your metabolism. FYI: Not everyone’s cortisol is too high! Many people under long-term stress make too little

cortisol and adrenaline, which is referred to as adrenal exhaustion.

2. Take a look at your diet. You cannot skip meals or eat refined junk food. It causes your blood sugar to drop and stimulates your adrenals to make additional cortisol and adrenaline.

3. Make sure you eat breakfast and that it includes good protein and fats. A predominantly high-carb breakfast, like cereal or bagels, will throw your blood sugar off for most of the day. Good protein and fats at each meal will help reduce the surge of insulin and will stimulate the production of glucagon, which aids in the breakdown of fats.

4. Check your digestion. If you struggle with bloating, gas, indigestion, heartburn or other irritable bowel problems, it is causing irritation and inflammation. This triggers further production of cortisol. Therefore, add some digestive enzymes, look at food combining and consider possible “hidden” food allergies.

Deep breathing exercises for one to two minutes or longer throughout the day can lower cortisol and adrenaline. This is important because the more cortisol and adrenaline you produce, the more insulin you produce. It’s a vicious cycle because cortisol makes your body resistant to insulin, which in turn causes even more insulin to be produced.

Playing the calorie counting game doesn’t work. It overlooks and ignores the impact stress and diet have on your hormones. Remember, the good Lord didn’t design a bad hormone. Cortisol and insulin are not bad for you, but if you overproduce them, they throw all the other hormones out of whack.

Dr. Len Lopez is a nutrition and fitness expert and creator of *The Work Horse Trainer*. He speaks extensively on diet,

exercise and how stress can affect your overall health and wellness.

For the original article, visit .

Stone-Throwing Attacks on Jews in East Jerusalem Intensifies

The Knesset's Internal Affairs and Environment Committee held a special session Wednesday on the rise in the number of stone-throwing attacks against Jews in east Jerusalem.

According to police data, such incidents have become a daily occurrence in the area and have recently escalated to include Molotov cocktails.

Yitzhak Lehrer, who heads the Housing Ministry's security division, briefed the committee on the "geographic expansion of stone-throwing incidents throughout the east Jerusalem sector." He stressed that while the ministry's security officers help extract any casualties in such incidents, the Jerusalem Police was in charge of enforcing the law.

Committee Chairwoman MK Miri Regev (Likud), requested information about the number of arrests in such cases and the punitive action taken against those arrested. Maj. Gen. Kobi Dudian of the Jerusalem District Police said that 207 perpetrators have been arrested in 2013, the majority of whom were minors, and that only 47 of them were detained pending the conclusion of the legal proceedings against them.

He noted that the number of cases involving stone and firebomb

throwing has spiked by dozens of percentage points since November 2012's Operation Pillar of Defense, but noted that in recent weeks, the number of firebomb incidents has been steadily declining, which he attributed to the arrest of several terror cells which orchestrated the violent attacks.

Attorney Nurit Blumstein of the Jerusalem District Prosecution briefed the committee on the punitive measures detailed in the Israeli law, saying that in some cases, such as those involving hurling stone at cars travelling on east Jerusalem's roads, the offense is punishable by up to 20 years in prison.

According to Blumstein offenses involving firebombs are punishable by 14-20 years in prison, while throwing stones at police officers, which is classified as assault on a member of the Israeli security forces, is punishable by a five-year prison term.

She stressed that the prosecution always requests that suspects arrested in connection to such cases be remanded for the duration of the proceedings, and that it appeals all rulings to the contrary.

Regev pressed law enforcement officials as to why only 47 of suspects were incarcerated for the duration of their court proceedings. She was told that judges consider various factors and had sole discretion over their rulings.

Elisha Peleg, who is in charge of security coordination on behalf of the Jerusalem municipality, said "the Jewish residents are denied security in east Jerusalem." He noted that virtually all Jewish neighborhoods in east Jerusalem have been adversely affected by Israel's lax enforcement, saying this includes harassment of Jewish girls by Arabs. "The Arabs want to divide Jerusalem and have resorted to illegal action because of the approaching diplomatic talks."

Hardliner legislator MK Moshe Feiglin said that the heart of the problem lies in Israel's reluctance to assert its

sovereignty over the Temple Mount, quoting a famous songwriter.

MK Moti Yogev (Habayit Hayehudi) said that he has felt the rise of violence in east Jerusalem first hand. He asked the police whether they are reassessing the situation and whether they would consider reinforcing the area with armed officers who would enforce the law more aggressively. He suggested that the State Prosecution ask that the courts to apply the maximum sentence on offenders.

MK Israel Eichler [UTJ] mentioned that on Tuesday night a funeral took place on the Mount of Olives during which stones were thrown at the mourners. "The state is not sending the message that it wants to control east Jerusalem," he said.

MK Talab Abu Arar (Ra'am-Ta'al) said he would like to see a discussion as well of Jewish stone throwers, because there has been a drastic spike in violence between Jews and Arabs. He called on everyone to join forces to eliminate violence.

Summing up the discussion, MK Miri Regev (Likud) said that "the Temple Mount and Jerusalem are in our hands and we must ensure the security of both Jews and Arabs in these places." She said that enforcement was not keeping up with the level of violence being committed and said she would write to the state attorney concerning this matter.

She asked the state attorney to present a plan for dealing with children under the age of 16 who throw stones. "We can't let them continue. Stones kill," she said. She recommended that police deploy differently at sensitive roads and junctures, as they have been asked to do in Judea and Samaria. There will be a follow-up hearing in a month, Regev said.

For the original article, vist .

Kenny Luck: God Wants You as a Son

Let's go get God's mind on this topic we are calling "uprising." If you have a Bible, I want you to turn to Jeremiah 3:19, and then we are going to go through Jeremiah 4:4. It's the heart of God's Word toward men.

We are going to see a decision by men when it comes to sonship. We are also going to see the consequences of that choice. We are going to see that there is a chance for a second decision to be made.

In Jeremiah 3:19, God says: "I myself said how gladly I would treat you like sons."

I want to stop right there. Whether you are a believer or you're not, God wants you as a son.

And then He goes on. He says what a father would say to a son: "And give you the most beautiful land with the most beautiful inheritance of any nation. I thought you would call me Father, and not turn away from me. But like a woman, unfaithful to her husband, so you have been unfaithful to me, oh house of Israel" (vv. 19-20).

Now, what's the result of turning down God's desire for your sonship in Him? "A cry is heard in the barren heights, the crying and weeping and pleading of the people of Israel because they have perverted their ways and have forgotten the Lord their God. Return faithless people. Oh Israel, I'll cure you from backsliding. Yes, we will come to you, for you are the Lord our God. Surely, the idolatrous, commotion on the hills and mountains is a deception" (vv. 21-23).

You see, there was a pull away from sonship toward false sonship, false validation and false acceptance. They can find sonship and identity for their masculinity in God as sons or, alternatively, out in their culture. When you go get it in your culture, it creates a commotion of suffering.

Verse 24 says, "From our youth, shameful gods have consumed the fruits from our fathers' labor, their flocks and herds, their sons and daughters. Let us lie down in our shame and let our disgrace cover us. We have sinned against the Lord our God, both we and our fathers from our youth till this day we have not obeyed the Lord our God."

Obey them in what? Obey them in just being sons? Obey the Lord just through being a passionate son?

Here's what Jeremiah 4:1 says: "If you will return, oh Israel, you'll return to me," declares the Lord. "If you put your detestable idols out of my sight and no longer go astray and if in a truthful, just and righteous way, you swear as surely as the Lord lives then the nations will be blessed by Him, and in Him. There will be glory."

Now, I want to pause there for a second. "You come back," God says.

Instead of producing this blast zone of suffering, you begin to be a blessing. You can become a blast zone of blessing. Blessed sons are a blessing to others!

Do you realize that God's purpose for you is to be a passionate son and to experience His fatherly blessings? In passing those blessings to you, then through you they are passed to the world.

When I pick up the paper, I see the curses that come from the lack of spiritual sonship: a lack of accountability, a lack of authority that's latching on to the fall of sonship out there in culture and the suffering it creates.

I long for this moment when passionate sons, blessed by a passionate God, are blessing people passionately in the blast zones of their influence.

In Jeremiah 4:3, God says, "This is what the Lord says to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem." Notice the target audience here. At stake are the blessings of nations.

The target audience is not women. That's not a chauvinistic statement. That's not a macho statement. For better or for worse, man has been given the mantle of leadership in families, communities and countries. It is true today, and it was true in Israel.

In Jeremiah 4:4, this is what the Lord says to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: "Break up your unplowed ground and do not sow among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, circumcise your hearts, you people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, or my wrath will flare up and burn like fire because of the evil you have done—burn with no one to quench it."

Unmitigated cultural adoption by cultures of men creates unmitigated suffering among people.

What is God saying? He certainly not talking to the woman when He says in verse 3, "Break up unplowed ground." He's not messing around. Do you know how the farmer breaks up unplowed ground? Is that hard work or soft work? It is hard work. This means you've got to go after the hard issues. He is talking to an agrarian culture that understands what it means to break up the unplowed ground. It means they don't plow the fields that are already cultivated.

What is the unplowed ground that He is talking about? He's not talking about the fields. He is talking about the spiritually unplowed ground of your heart.

Unplowed ground is unfruitful. It doesn't have crops planted,

so there has to be a softening. There has to be a transformation so that seed can go into the unplowed ground. He is talking about the softening of your heart, your willingness to be moldable and flexible and to receive instruction as the son of God.

Remember the headline, “I will gladly treat you like sons”? Well, this is one of those conversations where God is saying, “Son, can I have a word with you?”

“Break up the unplowed ground and do not sow among thorns.” When do you sow among thorns? When one of God’s men sows his masculinity and plants his identity into what culture says is a man. That’s sowing among thorns.

It was a problem in Judean culture back then, and it’s a problem today. Break up the unplowed ground in your life. That thing that just came to mind, start plowing it today.

This is the third in a series Every Man Ministries is calling “Uprising, Part 2.” We discover that a rebellion is taking place against the suffering created by broken masculinity. This article—and others that precede and follow—take us on a journey into the broken male culture, showing us that God is our Father and He wants us to return home to His family, and like any loving Father, He expects His sons to behave accordingly. Part 1 Part 2

Kenny Luck is the founder of Every Man Ministries and the men’s pastor at Saddleback Church. His 20th book, *Sleeping Giant: No Movement of God Without Men of God*, is the proven blueprint for men’s ministries and was recently released through B&H Publishing. Watch and read more of Kenny’s teaching at [www.everymanministries.com](#). Follow Every Man Ministries now on Facebook, Twitter (@everymm) and YouTube.

Alicia Keys Refuses to Cancel Her Tel Aviv Concert

Award-winning musician Alicia Keys told the *New York Times*, “I look forward to my first visit to Israel. Music is a universal language that is meant to unify audiences in peace and love, and that is the spirit of our show.” The Simon Wiesenthal Center has praised Keys’ as “courageous,” for coming to Israel to perform despite public pressure to do otherwise. Keys’ is considered one of the most successful pop singers, with her albums selling over 35 million copies and having 14 Grammy Awards to her name.

Alice Walker, the author of the *Color Purple*, wrote an open letter to Keys, stating, “It would grieve me to know you are putting yourself in danger (soul danger) by performing in an apartheid country that is being boycotted by many global conscious artists.” She also compared the Israeli regime to the apartheid system that used to exist in the American south, even going as far as claiming that Israel is worse than what Jim Crow used to be.

Walker has a long record of anti-Israel activism behind her name. She visited Gaza in 2008; is actively involved with the BDS Movement at the University of California at Berkeley, which recently passed a BDS motion; and refused to have the *Color Purple* translated into Hebrew, citing political motivations. She also was a supporter of the Gaza Freedom March and the Gaza Flotilla. Additionally, Walker has opposed Israeli participation in the Toronto Film Festival.

Yet Walker was not the only person to put pressure on Keys. Musician Roger Waters also encouraged Keys to cancel her

performance in Tel Aviv, inviting Keys to “join the rising tide of resistance,” and noted that “nothing has changed since the bad old days of apartheid South Africa and Segregated America. We must stand united with all our brothers and sisters against racism, colonialism, segregation and apartheid.” Despite that fact that the BDS movement implemented a social media campaign designed to pressure Keys, she did not change her decision.

Not an Apartheid State

Rabbi Marvin Hier, the dean and founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center said that, “Equating Israel with apartheid South Africa is a sinister distortion of the truth.” Freedom House, a non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on democracy, political freedom, and human rights, ranks Israel as the only democracy in the Middle East. The rights of Israeli Arabs are protected by Israeli law and none of the elements that existed in apartheid South Africa exist in the State of Israel today . A South African MP Rev. Dr. Kenneth Meshoe, a person of color who survived the apartheid policies of South Africa said recently, “I am shocked by the claim that the free, diverse, democratic state of Israel practices apartheid. This ridiculous accusation trivializes the word apartheid, minimizing and belittling the magnitude of the racism and suffering endured by South Africans of color.”

In regards to making peace, Hier added that “Israel has said countless times that it is willing to sit down with the Palestinians without pre-conditions. But Israel cannot be expected to make peace with Hamas, a terrorist organization committed to Israel’s destruction, just as African-Americans cannot make peace with the KKK.”

He pointed to “what is happening in Iran, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt” as examples for how it is impossible to have peaceful relations with Islamists dedicated to Israel’s destruction.

For the original article, visit [.](#)

5 Ways a Man Builds Discipline

Discipline is training to act in accordance with a certain set of rules. Young men either know or find out that it takes a certain amount of discipline to finish high school or graduate college. Older men also either know or learn the hard way that a strong sense of discipline is a requirement in order to be successful in the workplace.

Finally, a man who is in the position of being a husband must learn quickly that discipline is needed to maintain a strong marriage and to raise children effectively. In all honesty, discipline is a trait every man must come to grips with at some point in his life.

So, if discipline is needed so much in our culture, why is it not taught more to young men coming up through the ranks? Why does this culture have such a hard time raising effective and mature leaders? Why are men struggling in marriages and not growing up?

The answer lies in the source. Who or what is your source? Who are you allowing yourself to be mentored by or disciplined by? As I was reading through the book of Hebrews, I found a solid section of verses in chapter 12 that show clearly how God raises up men of discipline.

Five Ways a Man Builds Discipline

1. Earthly father. Hebrews 12:10 says, “[Our fathers]

disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness" (NIV). When speaking about training and discipline, I have to revert back to my earthly father. This was when I first experienced what discipline is and how it impacted my life. I understand that some men may not have had this opportunity to experience an earthly father, but maybe you had a mentor or close friend that helped you learn along the way. Either way, God first teaches us discipline by our earthly fathers but then goes on to say that God will discipline us for good or after we leave our earthly fathers. Once we leave the nest, we must continue to seek God and allow Him to discipline and influence us.

2. Submission. Hebrews 12:9 says, "We have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live!" Is not submission what we faced each time our parents told us to do as we were told? Did we not have to do things we didn't like and go places we didn't want to go? This was all part of the training, and some men are still going through this training long after living with their earthly fathers or parents. We must submit; we must remove signs of selfishness and willingly submit to Jesus Christ. We must learn to trust Him in our actions, trust Him in our decisions, trust Him in our relationships and trust His discipline. Don't wait another day to submit your all to the God who sacrificed everything!

3. Hardship. Hebrews 12:7 says, "Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?" The first line of this verse is enough to make you rethink all the hardships you have faced in life. What have those moments taught you? Were you able to come away a stronger and better person because of those hardships? We learn from this verse that through hardship, God is treating us as sons. Sit back and think about the life of Jesus for a moment. Think of the time

He lived in, the harsh words He encountered, the mocking He had to go through and the final beating and His death. Jesus' life was nothing but hardship after hardship, and yet He remained faithful—better yet, sinless. No, we can never live up to that standard, but we can certainly give an effort and learn from each hardship we face in life. Think this verse through the next time something hard in your life comes up.

4. Perseverance. Hebrews 12:1 says, “Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.” There is no question that I have learned the power of perseverance and consistency in my life. This verse nails the strong importance of removing those very things that cause you to sin and become a man that is consistent in Christ. Is your computer causing you to sin? Get a program installed to protect you, or get an accountability partner. Are your surroundings or your friends causing you to sin? Find a new source of friends, or find a new place to hang out. Perseverance is a very strong sign of discipline and maturity. A consistent man will find ways to run alongside Christ when he first gets up, as he encounters obstacles along his day and as he rests at night. Race hard, men!

5. Jesus. Hebrews 12:2-3 says, “[Let us fix] our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. ... Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” Jesus was and still is the very definition of discipline, maturity and manhood. He experienced an earthly father, He submitted to His father and to those that betrayed Him, He faced hardships unlike any other human that has ever lived, and through this entire experience He persevered. As we seek the answers of discipline and many other things, we just need to look and dig into the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. As the verse says, we must constantly find ways to fix our eyes and thoughts on Him. We must be selfless and remember the pain that He went through

and know that we are not alone in our pain. Christ is with us and ready to discipline us.

“My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and He punishes everyone He accepts as son” (Heb. 12:5-6).

I would love to hear your thoughts on the topic of discipline. How did you learn it, and how do you maintain it in your life?

Maturity is a blog built on establishing spiritual maturity in today’s man. The goal is to assist men in building better marriages, help men in grow in maturity and explore different aspects of manhood. features new weekly blog posts, daily social media updates and a powerful resources page. Stay up to date with the Maturity blog communities on Facebook and Twitter.

For the original article, visit .

Make a Choice: Quit Your Job or Renew Your Mind

Wait ... you may want to read this entire article before you do that.

The news is alarming. In the last four years millions have lost their job. My recommendation is for you to quit your job before you’re fired. Now, before you march in and tell your employer to take this job and ... “love it,” hear me out.

The traditional idea of a job is obsolete. The fact is, we're all entrepreneurial. You're entrepreneurial in the sense that God has designed you and put within you a deposit of ability, a gifting that will afford you the resources to meet the needs of your life, supply the desires of your heart and your family, and even finance your purpose.

Discovering this deposit is one of the most rewarding adventures known to man. When you make this discovery, you'll never work another job in your life. No, your life will become a passionate pursuit of meaning and fulfillment.

The other day, I glanced at a photo that was taken on the first tee of Pebble Beach. In that picture, I was standing with four other men that I have mentored through the years. This picture was taken at the beginning of our relationships.

Now, all four of those men are extremely successful, financially secure and fulfilling their purpose in life. As I reflected upon God's goodness in their lives, I also realized that each of them passionately pursued their individual and specific gifting. Not one of them had a traditional job.

Let me ask you a question. If you took a photo of yourself today and revisited that photo in 10 years, will you be "doing the same ol', same ol'?" Or will you have fulfilled those 10 years pursuing your life with passion?

The key is to discover your ability and gifting that God has deposited within you and transform that into a marketable skill that gives you sustained income for a lifetime. How do we do that?

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Rom. 12:2)

1. If you allow it, you will be conformed to the pattern of

this world. In other words, conformity will take over your life and you will become a compliant participant in the monotony of routine.

2. Be transformed. This means that you must go through a metamorphic process. To literally take on a new form. This may require a physical transformation including getting into shape. The fact is, you will never fulfill God's best in your life if you do not have the physical stamina to endure it. This also means you may need to learn something that you don't currently know in order to achieve something new.
3. Renew your mind. Your mind has incredible ability to learn. Don't believe the lie that you can't learn or comprehend. You have the ability to grow in knowledge, discernment, understanding, and wisdom. You must develop a ferocious appetite of reading. Today's technology is amazing and affords us an inexcusable opportunity to take in new information. On a daily basis, I have the opportunity to sit down with the most brilliant minds in the world through books, videos, articles, tweets, etc., to learn from these people freely.
4. As you pursue this metamorphosis in your life you will develop an awareness, a discernment, that will be invaluable. You will be able to test and prove what God's will is for you. When I was young and naive I trusted people. Now that I am older and wiser, I test people. I've learned that not everything is good, pleasing and perfect for me. I've learned that invaluable opportunity can come by saying, "No."

The discovery of your gift will not come easily, nor will you discover it by copycatting someone else. No, the secret is found in 1 Corinthians 2: 7-10.

You will never discover your deep reservoir of potential without knowing and understanding God and His original intent for you.

So, don't quit your job—yet.

Wait until you have fully discovered your God-given ability and gifting and discerned how to turn that into a marketable skill for sustained currency.

For the original article, visit [FivestarMan](#). *FivestarMan* was founded in 2008 by **Neil Kennedy**. Kennedy has passionately promoted God's Word for 25-plus years of ministry. He is known for practically applying biblical principles that elevate people to a new level of living. As a business, church, ministry and life consultant, Kennedy has helped others strategize the necessary steps to reach their full potential.

3 Health Problems Fixed With Exercise

When it comes to preventing health problems," says Dr. David Katz, founding director of the Yale University Prevention Research Center, "exercise is one of the best medicines we have." And as it turns out, certain exercises target certain health problems—regardless of your age or physical ability.

So, if you want to feel better when it comes to these three specific health problems—while potentially adding years to your life—be sure to include the related exercises in your "personal toolkit" of ways to achieve better health and living.

1. Insomnia/low energy. "We aren't sure why activity primes your body for sleep so well, but it's likely a combination of

factors, including lowering your core body temperature, increasing the sleep-promoting hormone melatonin and supporting a biological need to restore energy levels and repair cells and tissues when you sleep,” says Brad Cardinal, co-director of the sport and exercise psychology program at Oregon State University.

Although the reasons are hard to understand, the results are well documented and easy to define. Cardinal sums it up best by saying, “Exercisers fall asleep faster, suffer fewer middle-of-the-night wake-ups and have a reduced risk of sleep disorders.”

As for the best exercise to get you into that “good sleep equals more energy” routine, work your way up to 150 minutes per week of moderate activity. (Because exercise is stimulating, be sure to finish your workout at least three hours before bedtime.) For a moderate activity, yoga is hard to beat. Plus, a 2012 study has proven that yoga, along with deep-breathing techniques, relieved insomnia within four months. And a 2011 study found that when you exercise 150 minutes a week, you are 65 percent less likely to run out of energy during the day.

2. Food cravings/weight gain. If you constantly give in to food cravings or always snack, then you will likely experience weight gain. Trying to curb these habits with sheer willpower is tough because “in the throes of a craving, your brain is saying, ‘Feed me dopamine!’—that neurotransmitter that taps into the reward center of your brain. You can satisfy the call with carbs—or with exercise,” says Dr. John Ratey, the author of *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*.

What is the best exercise for crushing those cravings? Whenever you find yourself reaching for a snack, reach instead for your sneakers and take a brisk 15-minute walk. (Recent research has proven this will short-circuit those food-craving

messages in your head.)

3. Weakened immune system. Aerobic exercises coax immune cells out of body tissues and into your bloodstream, where they attack invading viruses and bacteria, explains David Nieman, a professor at Appalachian State University. His research has shown conclusively that five days of aerobic exercise a week reduces sick days by 43 percent.

Some of the best aerobic exercises are jogging, cycling and dancing. Simply do something aerobic for 30 minutes almost every day, and you will be boosting your immune system naturally.

Don Colbert, M.D., *is board certified in family practice and in anti-aging medicine. He also has received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine, and he has helped millions of people discover the joy of living in divine health.*

For the original article, visit .