

Getting Stoned: The Key to Unity Among Believers

As I speak to believers in Yeshua around the world, one common topic of conversation invariably comes up. How can we as believers be more unified? After all, we all read from the same Bible and we all claim to serve and love the same G-D. We all profess to believe that Yeshua (Jesus) is the Messiah. I firmly believe that the only real way we will all become unified is if we get stoned.

In order to understand what I mean by getting stoned, let me draw your attention to 1 Peter 2:1-4 (TLV): “So get rid of all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all *lashon ha-ra*. As newborn babes, long for pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow toward salvation—now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by men but chosen by God and precious.”

We know that these words were written to believers in Yeshua because Peter tells us in 1 Peter 2:9: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

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So when we read the words from Peter in the opening verses of this chapter, we must acknowledge that the people Peter was writing to were young believers in Messiah. In verse 2, Peter describes them as babies, who also were struggling with malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and *lashon hara* (evil speech, often defined as gossip).

Then in verse 4, Peter tells them that they had come to faith in a living stone who was rejected by men, but chosen by G-D and precious. With these words, in verse 1, Peter begins to tell those reading his letter how to overcome the list of disunifying traits or sins that were keeping them from walking in unity when he describes Yeshua as “a living stone.”

Notice that Peter doesn't call Yeshua a living brick, but rather a living stone. This is because bricks by design are all the same size and shape, while stones are each unique and different; they are each a different size and shape. But, Peter doesn't end by calling Yeshua a living stone; he goes on to call the believers living stones in 1 Peter 2:5: “You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house—a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Messiah Yeshua.”

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Peter says we are living stones being built up as a spiritual house. If you have ever watched a stonemason building a wall of a house, before he begins to stack the stones to build the wall, he looks carefully at each and every stone to choose which stone will fit where in the wall so that each stone will support every other stone. He chooses from the different sizes, shapes and colors, establishing in His mind exactly what the finished wall will look like.

In these first few verses of 1 Peter, we find the only real answer to the problem of disunity. First: we need to understand that we are both a holy priesthood, which means we must serve the one and only living G-D in holiness or separation from the world and its ways. Second: we need to understand that while we all are part of the same priesthood, we are intended to be living stones and not bricks. By G-D's perfect design, we are different; we look different; we fit in a unique and chosen place in the wall of the house G-D is building.

If we try to change so that we look like any other stone, we will fail to be what we were designed to be. The wall of the spiritual house will not look as it was designed, and it will not have the strength G-D designed it to have. When we understand that we are all designed to be in unity while being different and that unity doesn't require uniformity, then all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and *lashon hara* will disappear, and true unity in holiness will replace it.

So it is my prayer that every single believer in Messiah Yeshua will get stoned today.

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