

To Die Is Gain!

Many years ago, I had a dream that I was ministering at a congregation that I had once pastored. In the dream, while I was preaching, all of a sudden, everyone stood up and started saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America."

It was so loud that it literally drowned out my message. I felt totally humiliated as I was experiencing this in the dream. I immediately left the pulpit and walked out of the sanctuary into the restroom. I said, "Lord, I feel so humiliated. What should I do?" The Lord answered, "Go back in there and finish." I really did not want to go back in. But in the dream, I obeyed the Lord and went back in. As I reentered the sanctuary and got behind the pulpit, somebody yelled out, "They don't want to listen to you anymore!" I finished the message, and the dream ended.

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I was really shaken by this dream. I just knew that the Lord was saying something to me, but I was not sure of what it was. At first, I interpreted what happened in the dream as something I was doing. I asked, "Lord, what did I do wrong to bring this about? Where have I been weak as a leader that such a thing could happen? Where did I fail, Lord?" Several days later, I was praying about this dream, still being disturbed by it. I was in a hotel room getting ready to go preach somewhere when suddenly the Holy Spirit spoke to me,

"It was not about you being a weak leader. I was not showing you this to point out something that you are doing wrong. What I was showing you is that My people's allegiance is not really to Me; their allegiance is to the American dream."

Here were all these people gathered in a congregation thinking they were “true” followers, and yet they were totally deceived. Deep down inside, their allegiance was not to the Lord. Their priority was not to live sacrificially for Him or to be willing to submit to His authority and call upon their lives. Instead, they were trying to hang on to the world. They had placed God in a little box on the side. They only included Him in their life when it was convenient, or they needed something. They were not in alignment or in allegiance to Hashem. They were in the pursuit of the American dream and all that they thought it offered.

Many have nice homes with Bibles on our coffee tables and say a prayer before eating and sometimes before we go to sleep. But, how many of us have been rewired by the Word of God? Do we filter everything in our life through natural eyes or spiritual eyes? Are we living in the light of eternity? Does our perspective of life take into account the fact that this world is not our home (Heb. 13:14)?

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Consider the Apostle Paul who wrote: “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ,” (1 Cor. 11:1, NIV).

Paul was totally transformed, and he was calling the church to follow his example. When we examine Paul’s life, he was certainly not living to make himself happy or satisfied. His fulfillment did not come from getting all that he could from the present world. He completely refuted that. He was living for one thing. He was living for the glory of Messiah Jesus.

In fact, he said in the book of Philippians (3:8) that he had suffered the loss of all things in the world. He had lost his friends, his possessions and even his reputation. He had been

shipwrecked, beaten, imprisoned, persecuted and mocked. He lost his position as a religious leader and the status he had in society. He gave all that up. He sacrificed everything the world had to offer him. Paul said he counted it all rubbish in order that he might gain Christ and be found in Him. He was living in the light of eternity. Paul's eyes were set on a greater prize, to be transformed and used by God while on this earth.

Paul was entirely abandoned unto God. My question for us today is: "Are we?" When I say this, this is not an accusation to anyone because I apply it to myself. Jesus said that when He returns, many people will say, "Lord, Lord," and He will say to them, "I never knew you" (Matt. 7: 22-23). In other words, at His return, there are going to be many people that thought they belonged to Him, and Jesus is going to say, "I don't know you." Some think they are Christians because they have little trinkets in their homes and are doing a few Christian things, but have never been radically changed – they are living for the world. Beloved, are we submitted to the present age or to the age to come?

Paul put it this way, "To live is Christ and to die is gain," (Phil. 1:21).

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This is what I am talking about. I am talking about us being so rewired that every day when we wake up in the morning, our motto, coming from our deepest disposition is: "To live is Christ, to die is gain." That is what our whole life should be about, not just including Jesus in our life when it is advantageous. Not only worshipping Him on Sunday morning. Not making Him just another part of our life. No, He becomes everything! We need to acquire an eternal perspective and declare, like Paul, "To live is Christ and to die is gain!"

Rabbi Schneider hosts the impactful television program, *Discovering The Jewish Jesus*, which is available in more than 100 million homes in the United States and nearly 200 nations worldwide. In 2021 he began broadcasting on radio and now airs across America. Rabbi Schneider imparts revelation of Jesus' Jewish heritage and His fulfillment of Messianic prophecy. Questions of how the Old and New Testaments tie together, and how Yeshua completes the unfolding plan of The Almighty Yahweh, are answered with exceptional clarity. His newest book, *Decoding the Torah*, is available now at .