

Messianic Rabbi: How God's Word Can Free You From COVID-19 Frustration

Frustrated. That's how I felt.

I woke up this past week after more than a month of quarantine and social distancing, and I was frustrated. I was frustrated because I was still unable to gather together with my congregation for worship.

Technology is a blessing, but it just isn't the same as being together in our sanctuary as our voices join in praise and adoration of our heavenly Father. I was frustrated because I missed my friends and family.

Yes, I can FaceTime, Zoom, GoToMeeting and Facebook with them. But there is nothing like the feeling of hugging someone whose heart G-D has knit together with yours.

I was frustrated because I like having order in my life and COVID-19 has changed nearly every plan I had for this year: Synagogue events canceled, speaking engagements canceled, conference canceled, weddings canceled, birthdays canceled, vacations canceled.

I am frustrated because of the division in the body of Messiah that is a result of the response to COVID-19. Some say, "If you don't meet in violation of governmental directives, you are showing a lack of faith." Others say, "If you meet together, you are not loving your neighbor as yourself." I am frustrated because the entire world is seeing this division among believers in real time on their computer screens, devices and phones.

I am frustrated because the details of COVID-19 seem to morph

every day so that there is no way possible to actually come to terms with the adjustments. I am frustrated because one day they say, "Don't wear a mask because it won't help," followed by, "Wear a mask; it could save a life."

I am frustrated because the media presents one doctor who says this virus is catastrophically horrible only to be followed by another doctor who says, "This whole thing is blown out of proportion." I am frustrated that we are warned of massive casualties in the millions only to have those numbers thankfully reassessed to the thousands.

I was frustrated because the government in news conferences continually announces the soon release of upcoming directives for restoration of normalcy, only to later announce a new committee tasked with establishing the directives that were previously to be announced.

But most of all, I am frustrated because I am frustrated. I am a believer in Messiah Yeshua and I should not be frustrated. The above frustration all flowed through my mind in a flash of time—probably a moment. My next thought, though, was from a song I learned when I was a young child. I watched the stage version of the play *Shenandoah* and the lyrics of the first verse are:

"Freedom ain't a state like Maine or Virginia/
Freedom ain't across some county line/
Freedom is a flame that burns within
ya/
Freedom's in the state of mind."

Those words from a song long forgotten lovingly shook my soul back into alignment with my spirit. These words brought back into focus who I was and Who is really sovereign in this world. I remembered that nothing going on is outside of G-D's view and control. I was once again reminded of what Yeshua said in John 16:33 (TLV):

"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have shalom. In the world you will have trouble, but take heart! I

have overcome the world!"

Paul said it this way in Philippians 4:11-12: "I am not saying this because I am in need—for whatever circumstance I am in, I have learned to be content. I know what it is to live with humble means, and I know what it is to live in prosperity. In any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of contentment—both to be filled and to go hungry, to have abundance and to suffer need. I can do all things through Messiah who strengthens me."

My frustration, which took weeks to build up within me, left in seconds when I allowed the Spirit of G-D to recalibrate my heart. Once that happened, I was once again set free because freedom is a state of mind. If you are like I was and are struggling with frustration, do yourself a huge favor and allow G-D's Word to remind you of your freedom from frustration.

Yeshua said it this way in John 8:36: "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed!" {eo}

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