



SUMMONED TO THE SUMMIT

*'Ascending the Mountain of
Yahweh'*

by Matt German

Exod 19:16-20 “And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the sound of a trumpet very loud; and all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet Elohim; and they stood at the lower part of the mount. And mount Sinai, the whole of it, smoked, because Yahweh descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and Elohim answered him by a voice. And Yahweh came down upon mount Sinai, to the top of the mount: and Yahweh called Moses to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.”

Yahweh is calling us to the top of the mountain. Individually and corporately, He is calling us. Like Moses, we are being summoned to the summit. Will we go up? Yahweh is calling us up to where the air is rare, that place in which we are totally and completely dependent upon His provision. More than that, He wants to bring us into His presence.

That won't just “happen.” It's going to require effort, perseverance, dedication, and commitment to scale that mountain. It's going to require teamwork. And it won't be like walking on a smooth, flat, paved road – it will be rough terrain that we'll be ascending, through thorns and thistles and hot, dry air. We'll sweat. We'll get some bumps and bruises. And we'll probably get tired – in fact, we may experience an almost overwhelming urge to quit. But if we wait upon Yahweh, we will renew our strength. If we wait upon Yahweh, we will mount up with wings as eagles. If we wait upon Yahweh, we will run and not be weary, and we will walk and not faint (Isa. 40:31). The word 'wait' in this verse is translated from the Hebrew *qaváh* (#6960 in Strong's) which means to bind together, collect, expect, gather, look, tarry, or wait upon. In order for us to renew our strength, to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint, we must *qaváh* – we must be bound together, collected, expecting, gathering, looking for, tarrying, and waiting upon

Yahweh. In other words, our entire focus must be upon Him. The children of Israel were not allowed to ascend mount Sinai with Moses; in fact, they were forbidden access (Exod. 19:12-13). Why? Because they were unwilling to *qaváh* upon Yahweh.

While we are being summoned to the mountain, it isn't the same mountain to which Moses was summoned. We have not come to Sinai, a mountain that might be touched by hands, a mountain scorched by fire, enveloped by blackness and darkness and tempest, a mountain whose surface quaked with the sound of the trumpet. No, we have come to a different mountain – to mount Zion, to the city of the living Elohim, heavenly Jerusalem. We have come to the mountain of the general assembly and congregation of the firstborn of those enrolled in heaven. We have come to Elohim, Judge of all, and to Yahshua, the mediator of a new covenant (Hebr 12:18-25).

We have been summoned to the summit. What is the summit? It isn't just the “highest point” of a mountain. The summit is the meeting place, a “conference of highest-level officials” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 1997). As sons and daughters of Yahweh, as princes and princesses of the Most High, we are being called into communion with the one true Elohim. Will we go up? We must.

And as we ascend, we'll begin to see things from His perspective. We'll begin to get glimpses of the view from the top, to see the big picture, the broader panorama. We won't be worried about what we might have left behind in Egypt, and the trials and tribulations of life in the camp will begin to seem small and petty, insignificant. The noise of “war in the camp” will fade and we'll be able to discern clearly our Father's voice. We'll take off our shoes and stand in His presence, beholding His awesome esteem. And as we commune with Him and receive instruction from His mouth, the breath of His Spirit, the Wind, will blow across us and bring times of refreshing. The hot, dry air of the desert will be swept away by *Ruach Ha Kodesh*, bringing revival and exhilaration. Yahweh will sustain us at altitude with pure oxygen from His throne. And we will be like Peter, James and John, transfixed by the Transfigured One.

Matt 17:2-5 “And after six days Yahshua takes with Him Peter, and James, and John his brother, and brings them up into a high mountain apart: and He was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as the light ... a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear you Him.”

After six prophetic days – 6,000 years since Creation – Yahweh wants to lead us by His right Hand, Yahshua Messiah, to a high mountain apart. Like Peter, James, and John, we will witness first-hand the transfiguration of Messiah's Body, a Body without spot nor wrinkle (Eph. 5:27). There, in that place, a great, bright cloud of Yahweh's esteem will overshadow us, and we will hear His voice proclaiming "This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." Even now, Yahweh is seating us in heavenly places with His own Son, changing us from glory to glory (Eph. 2:6, 2 Cor. 3:18).

Psa. 24:3-5 Who may ascend to Yahweh's hill? Who may stand in His holy place? ⁴ He who has clean hands and a pure heart; who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood, and has not sworn deceitfully. ⁵ He shall receive a blessing from Yahweh, righteousness from the God of his salvation.

We can go up. We should go up. We must go up. Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh! (Mic. 4:2)

Spiritual Improvisation

'Going and Flowing with the Spirit'

Music has been called the "universal language" because of its ability to communicate with people from different places, cultures, and times. There are many styles of music in the world, and some of those styles are very different from each other. Classical music is different from jazz music. Both utilize certain musical forms. Within the classical music genre there are concertos, symphonies, operas, chamber music, etc. The music is generally composed using a disciplined approach and according to a specific set of rules. Jazz music, on the other hand, consists of ballads, standards, blues, bossa novas, etc., and is composed with very few rules. The two styles of music also differ in how they are performed: classical musicians play "all the notes on the page", i.e., exactly the way the composer wrote it, while jazz musicians start with a general melody, form, or song structure and then improvise.

As believers we can learn some great spiritual lessons from the concept of improvisation, which is defined as "an act of improvising". The word 'improvise' means "to compose and perform or deliver without previous preparation; extemporize. To compose, play, recite, or sing (verse, music, etc.) on the spur of the moment." The word derives from two Latin words: im- + prōvīsus ptp. of prōvidēre "to see beforehand, prepare, provide for (a future circumstance)."

The irony of this definition, as it relates to music, is that masters of jazz improvisation perform the way they do not because they didn't prepare, but because they did. They will spend hours upon hours "in the woodshed", working on their

craft so that when the time comes to "play live", they're ready.

A well-known jazz instructor said, "The jazz musician is an instant composer! The melodies which come from their instruments are conceived in their mind just before they play them. The difference between the improviser and the traditional composer is this: the "jazz" has no eraser to instantly correct mistakes. They practice long and hard trying to make their physical body and their mental frame of mind an appropriate vehicle to execute the ideas formulated in their mind."

While classical musicians practice long and hard in order to play the music on the written page, jazz musicians put in the same effort in order to improvise. This basically comes down to the difference between what psychologists call 'left brain' or 'right brain'. The left side of the brain is the analytical or logical side, while the right side is the intuitive, creative side.

A number of years ago there was a movie called Mr. Holland's Opus. In it was an interesting scene between a high school music teacher and one of his students, a young lady who was struggling to learn to play the clarinet. She was frustrated and ready to quit. Finally he sat down with her and they had this exchange:

TEACHER: "You know what we've been doing wrong, Miss Lang? We've been playing the notes on the page."

STUDENT: "But what else is there to play?"

TEACHER: "There's a lot more to music than notes on a page.... It's about heart, it's about feelings, and moving people, and something beautiful, and being alive,... and it's not about notes on a page."

What does any of this have to do with us as believers? Everything. Too often we can become so locked into the 'notes on the page' in the Bible that those words no longer have any life in them for us – therefore, they don't produce life in us and we are ineffective in impacting other lives for the Kingdom. We lose sight of the most important thing – the relationship with the Master Composer!

Mrk. 13:11 "When they lead you away and deliver you up, don't be anxious beforehand, or premeditate what you will say, but say whatever will be given you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit."

Yahshua was speaking about specific circumstances here, but the concept can be applied more generally in our everyday lives. We need to be so familiar with the written Word and so in-tune with the Spirit that we don't have to worry or premeditate what we're going to do or say in a particular situation – we're able to simply "go with the flow" because we are ready. "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25).

2 Chr. 3:17 “Now Yahweh is Spirit and where the Spirit of Yahweh is, there is liberty”

Because they haven't 'premeditated' every note that they're going to play, jazz musicians are free to make a mistake at any time. They have the liberty to do that. Similarly, we as believers, when we're led by the Spirit, can sometimes miss the mark and make a mistake. We don't do it deliberately, but when it does happen, we can have the assurance that “there is no condemnation to those who are in Messiah...” (Rom. 8:1).

Many modern churches are like dogmatic classical musicians; when they gather together, everything has to be “note for note”, exactly as it's written on the page (i.e., according to their tradition, their way of doing things, or what they're used to). There can be no variation, there can be no liberties taken. That mindset has got to change, because Yahweh wants us to be led by His Spirit. But in order for that change to happen and for it to work the way He intends, each of us individually must spend that practice time in the 'woodshed' – praying, meditating on the word, praising and worshipping Him on our own, etc. We've got to have that time in our own lives on a regular and consistent basis.

Psa. 46:4 “There is a river, the streams of which make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tents of the Most High”

There is only one Spirit of Yahweh (one river), but there can be multiple “streams” and “tributaries” coming out of that river. Different congregations and groups might be parts of different streams at different times. The question is, is that “stream” making glad the city of Yahweh?

There are also different streams of the Spirit within the local assembly. How we flow together individually and corporately is affected by many things: our preconceptions, our past experiences, our religious traditions, our current circumstances. We've got to learn to leave all of that stuff behind so that we can enter in and freely worship our heavenly Father.

“Spiritual improvisation” is allowing Yahweh, by His Spirit, to lead, guide, and direct our steps, our words, and even our thought processes (how we think) – both alone and together.

Isa. 35:1-7a The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. ² It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of Yahweh, the excellency of our God. ³ Strengthen you the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. ⁴ Tell those who are of a fearful heart, Be strong, don't be afraid: behold, your God will come [with] vengeance, [with] the recompense of

God; He will come and save you. ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. ⁶ Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the mute shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. ⁷ The glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.

This is a prophetic word with a specific fulfillment, but it should also have a profound meaning to us as believers today. We have all experienced dry ground and desert conditions in our lives. The good news is that the glowing sand will become a pool when the water of the Spirit breaks out within us!

1 Cor. 14:26 What is it then, brothers? When you come together, each one of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has another language, has an interpretation. Let all things be done to build each other up.

This is, in effect, speaking of “spiritual improvisation” in the local assembly. Top jazz musicians practice diligently on their own so that when they come together to play with others, they are able to flow seamlessly together. So it should be in the local assembly; we develop and hone our spiritual gifts on our own and in little “combos”, so that when the local assembly comes together, everybody has something to offer and it all flows together by the Spirit.

When jazz musicians improvise, to most people – even many musicians – it seems like ‘magic’ or something that one must be tremendously gifted to do. Even highly skilled classical musicians tend to struggle initially when they first attempt to improvise. However, within the jazz community there is the belief that “anyone can improvise” – anyone, with the proper encouragement and instruction, can learn how to improvise and become good at it with enough practice.

To many within the Body of Messiah, this concept of “spiritual improvisation” carries the same mystique – that one must be tremendously gifted. But the apostle Paul said that “you can all prophesy” (1 Cor. 14:31). Any believer, with the proper encouragement and instruction, can learn how to ‘improvise’ spiritually, to flow in the Spirit, personally and corporately.

Yahshua repeatedly said “whoever has ears to hear, let him hear”. In the book of Revelations it states numerous times to “hear what the Spirit is saying to the *ekklisia*”. One of the most crucial skills that we as believers must master is the ability to hear His voice, regardless of what is going on around us or what other people are saying. To hear and be led by the Spirit is a part of our spiritual inheritance – it was and is the Father's desire for us, but we must still appropriate it by faith and make the decision to live that way on a daily basis. For spiritual improvisation to become reality, we must get in the flow!

Recent Sermons

- The Crucible (7/30/11)
- Where Are the Heroes (6/18/11)
- Spiritual Improvisation (5/14/11)
- Shaken, Not Stirred? (5/07/11)

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Recommended Tool of the Month

Fulfilling Your God Given Destiny by Casey Treat.

“God didn’t create you to be a spectator! He planned for you to run the race, finding and following His course of destiny to a life of significance and fulfillment. You may not know what your calling is but God has planned your destiny, and He will help you find it. Pastor Casey Treat offers principles you can apply in your own life to help you identify your calling and begin to live it out. And if you’re already on your destiny course, you can discover how to deepen your faith and build the endurance you need to finish the race.”

Available at Amazon.com (hard cover).

Yahweh’s Feast Calendar – 2011

We understand that people have different understandings of Yahweh’s calendar. These are the feast dates for 2011 as observed by Lion of Judah Family Worship Center:

Passover*	Apr. 17 th (Sun.)
Days of Unleavened Bread	Apr. 18 th – 24 th (Mon. – Sun.)
Pentecost	June 12 th (Sun.)
Trumpets	Sep. 28 th (Wed.)
Day of Atonement	Oct. 7 th (Fri.)
Feast of Tabernacles	Oct. 12 th – 18 th (Wed. – Tue.)
Last Great Day	October 19 th (Wed.)

** observed the evening before*

Bear in mind that the Biblical day begins at sunset the night before.

Contact us:

(PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW MAILING ADDRESS)

Lion of Judah Family Worship Center	www.4lionofjudah.com
P.O. Box 11141	pastor@4lionofjudah.com
Huntsville, AL 35814	(256) 797-9779

Lion of Judah Family Worship Center
P.O. Box 11141
Huntsville, AL 35814

