



WHERE ARE YOU PLANTED?

by Matt German

Psa. 92:12-15 “The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree: He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They are planted in the house of Yahweh; They shall flourish in the courts of our Elohim. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; They shall be full of sap and green: To show that Yahweh is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.”

Each of us is called to be planted in the house of Yahweh. That is not some transient state – that’s not being spiritually “homeless” or leading a gypsy lifestyle in our walk. Yahweh has preordained a place for each of us – not only within the Body of Messiah, but in a particular (local) part of the Body. He does not desire that we be like the tumbleweed, tossed and buffeted by the wind and without root, blown across trackless desert beneath scorching sun. Rather, we must be joined to the true Vine and planted.

What is the whole purpose of us being planted in the house of Yahweh? So that we might flourish; that we might bring forth fruit; that we might be full of sap and greenness. Why? So that we might show the world that Yahweh is upright – that He is our Rock and that there is no unrighteousness in Him.

Yahweh, in His infinite wisdom and goodness, has provided many incredible lessons for us in His creation – if we can only open our eyes to see them. In the Scripture verses quoted above, for instance, we find two: the palm tree and the cedar. Let’s consider them in turn.

The palm tree is known for its durability, flexibility, and ability to thrive in sandy soil. Unlike more majestic-looking trees, it doesn’t appear particularly strong or sturdy. Yet it can bend in the gale-force winds of a hurricane and survive. It can withstand the constant onslaught of salty air and sea spray.

The cedar of Lebanon is known for several other characteristics. Though it can grow to a height of ninety feet, it also grows out horizontally, sometimes measuring as much as forty-two feet in girth. It provides broad and dense shade. Its wood is durable, but it is also fragrant and fine-grained. In fact,

cedar was the type of wood used in the construction of the Temple under King Solomon. In addition, cedar wood contains a special oil that prevents destruction by dry-rot and worms.

Understanding the natural characteristics of these two kinds of trees provides us with added insight into our own walk. Like the palm tree, we must be durable, flexible, and able to stand firm in the face of the winds of adversity. Like the cedar, we must branch out, providing shade for others and giving off a pleasing fragrance to the world. The anointing, that unique spiritual oil flowing in us, will protect us from spiritual dry-rot and the worms of offense, envy, and bitterness.

We must be planted, and we must be planted where Yahweh desires to plant us – not where we think we ought to be planted. We must be planted in the House of Yahweh, in the courts of our Elohim, and within His sanctuary. Why is that important? Because the sanctuary is where we receive the anointing. That’s where our healing is. That’s where our deliverance is. That’s where we can encourage and exhort one another. And that’s where iron sharpens iron.

One of the adversary’s favorite strategies is to divide and conquer. He knows that there is strength in numbers (Lev. 26:8, Deut. 32:30) and that a house divided against itself cannot stand (Matt. 12:25). He will do whatever he can to inhibit members from being joined and knit together, and from being planted in their appointed House. He will try to convince us that it’s not important, that we don’t really need to fellowship, that “so-and-so isn’t perfect and therefore isn’t worthy of my time or commitment.” He will try to tell us that we can’t worship Yahweh and fellowship with other believers if we aren’t perfect, if we’re having struggles at home or on the job, if we haven’t had the “model” relationship with our spouse or fellow believers. All the while, Yahweh is simply waiting for us to stop looking at ourselves and look to Him. Rather than using our trials, struggles, and situations as excuses for NOT fellowshiping, for not coming before Him and worshipping, we ought to take those cares to the foot of Golgotha, roll them over upon Yahshua, plead His Blood over our sins and shortcomings, and simply enter into Yahweh’s presence.

Psa. 1:3 “And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also does not wither; And whatsoever he does shall prosper.”

It’s when we are planted that we are truly fruitful, bringing forth fruit in season. It’s when we are planted that we do not wither under adverse conditions. It’s when we are planted that we prosper in all things, including our relationships.

Each of us must find that place to which we have been called. Each of us must find that place where Yahweh desires that we be planted. And once we have found that place, we must allow ourselves to take root there. In fact, it is then up to us to decide to put down roots there:

Jer 17: 7-8 “Blessed is the man that trusts in Yahweh, and whose trust Yahweh is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, that spreads out its roots by the river, and shall not fear when heat comes, but its leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.”

Where are you joined? Where are you “fitly framed and knit together” with other members of the Body? Where have you been planted by Yahweh?

The Crucible *‘Overcoming the Fiery Trial’*

The life of the believer is not all “sweetness and light”. Every believer in Messiah inevitably goes through trials and tribulations. The greatest test might be called ‘the crucible’. A crucible is defined as “a container of metal or refractory material employed for heating substances to high temperatures; a severe, searching test or trial.”

The ancient Israelites experienced the ‘crucible’:

Deut. 4:20 “But Yahweh has taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be to Him a people of inheritance, as at this day.”

Ironically, Yahweh took the Israelites “out of the frying pan and into the fire”. They went from Egypt into the wilderness.

Deut. 8:1-7 All the commandments which I command you this day shall you observe to do, that you may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which Yahweh swore to your fathers. ² You shall remember all the way which Yahweh your Elohim has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that He might humble you, to prove you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments, or not. ³ He humbled you, and allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna, which you didn’t know, neither did your fathers know; that He might make you know that man does not live by bread only, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Yahweh does man live. ⁴ Your clothing didn’t grow old on you, neither did your foot swell, these forty years. ⁵ You shall consider in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so Yahweh your Elohim chastens you. ⁶ You shall keep the commandments of Yahweh your Elohim,

to walk in His ways, and to fear Him. ⁷ For Yahweh your Elohim brings you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of springs and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills;

Yahweh allowed the Israelites to experience ‘the crucible’ in order to test or prove them (v2), to know what was in their hearts. He will do the same with us. But also notice that there was a great reward at the end of the test (v7).

‘The Crucible’ is also the name for the final test during Marine Corps “boot camp”:

“The Crucible is the final test in recruit training, and represents the culmination of all of the skills and knowledge a Marine should possess. Designed in 1996 to **emphasize the importance of teamwork in overcoming adversity**, the Crucible is a rigorous 54-hour field training exercise demanding the application of everything a recruit has learned until that point in recruit training, and includes a total of 48 miles of marching. It simulates typical combat situations with strenuous testing, hardship, and the deprivation of food and sleep. A recruit is given three MREs and four to eight hours of sleep through the entire 54-hour event... recruits are broken into squad-sized teams and placed under the charge of one drill instructor...

“Throughout the Crucible, recruits are faced with **physical and mental challenges** that must be accomplished before advancing further. Teamwork is stressed, as the majority of tasks are completely impossible without it; each group must succeed or fail as a whole. The others will result in failure unless every recruit passes through together, **requiring the team to aid their fellow recruit(s)** who struggle in the accomplishment of the given mission. Also stressed are the Corps’ **core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment**; events sometimes present a moral challenge.” ¹

Yahweh uses His ‘crucible’ for the same purposes – to emphasize the importance of teamwork in overcoming adversity, and to require us to overcome certain challenges before He allows us to move on into the ‘deeper things’ or additional responsibility.

Psa. 12:6 “The words of Yahweh are pure words, As silver refined in an earthen furnace, purified seven times.”

The word furnace here is translated from the Hebrew *aliyl* (al-EEL, Strong’s H5948) – “in the sense of completing, probably a crucible (as working over metal)”

We’re told in Scripture that “we have this treasure in earthen vessels” (2 Cor. 4:7). The reality is that **Yahweh’s Word in us**

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/article_on/United_States_Marine_Corps_Recruit_Training#The_Crucible

will be tested and refined! And it may be tested and refined 7 times! The refining process doesn't necessarily get out all of the 'dross' the first time.

Psa. 17:3 "You have proved [tested, investigated, examined, tried] my heart; You have visited me in the night; You have tried me, and found nothing; I have resolved that my mouth shall not disobey."

The test isn't the most important thing – what's important is how you respond to it! Can you take the heat without lashing out, giving up in frustration, or disobeying with your mouth?

Pro. 17:3 "The refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold, But Yahweh tests the hearts."

Here 'refining pot' is translated from the Hebrew *mitsréph* (mits-RAFE, Strong's H4715) – a crucible (refining pot). Yahweh will use His own form of crucible or fiery trial in order to test a person's heart. Can you cling to His Word and His promises in the midst of the firestorm?

Probably the clearest example of a 'crucible' in Scripture is in Daniel 3. Most believers are very familiar with these events, when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, set up a huge golden image and issued a decree commanding all of his subjects to fall down and worship it (v1-6). Anyone who failed to obey would be thrown into a "burning fiery furnace" (v6). When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to obey, Nebuchadnezzar was enraged, yet they remained steadfast – and bold – in their commitment to Yahweh:

Dan. 3:17-20 "... Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up." ¹⁹ Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: [therefore] he spoke, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was wont to be heated. ²⁰ He commanded certain mighty men who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, [and] to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

This was a bold stand from these men; they expressed their faith in Yahweh's willingness to deliver them from their trial, yet acknowledged that, even if He didn't, they were not going to bow to Nebuchadnezzar's demand. In his fury the king commanded that the furnace be heated 7 times hotter than normal, then these faithful men were cast bound into this 'crucible'. To everyone's astonishment, they did not perish but were actually seen walking around, loosed, with a fourth man – one "like a Son of the gods" (v25).

Dumbfounded, Nebuchadnezzar called the men to come forth out of the furnace.

Dan. 3:27-30 The satraps, the deputies, and the governors, and the king's counselors, being gathered together, saw these men, that the fire had no power on their bodies, nor was the hair of their head singed, neither were their pants changed, nor had the smell of fire passed on them. ²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel [messenger], and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and have changed the king's word, and have yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. ²⁹ Therefore I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; because there is no other god who is able to deliver after this sort. ³⁰ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the province of Babylon.

These men endured a literal 'crucible'. It was only their faith and the supernatural protection of Yahweh, the one true God, that preserved and delivered them – and brought them out in triumph! They not only survived but were promoted!

One lesson that we can draw from this is that you cannot walk in real victory without overcoming real adversity. In fact, the greatest test comes before the greatest victory.

A crucible can take many forms. It will usually be unique to the individual – Yahweh knows what is 'dross' in your life and what He will have to do to purge it out of you!

The apostle Peter warned that believers would be tested:

1 Pet 4:12-19 Beloved, don't be astonished at the fiery trial which has come upon you, to test you, as though a strange thing happened to you. ¹³ But because you are partakers of Messiah's sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of His glory also you may rejoice with exceeding joy. ¹⁴ If you are insulted for the name of Messiah, blessed are you; because the Spirit of glory and of Yahweh rests on you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. ¹⁵ For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters. ¹⁶ But if one of you suffers for being a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify Yahweh in this matter. ¹⁷ For the time [has come] for judgment to begin at the house of Yahweh. If it begins first at us, what will happen to those who don't obey the gospel of Elohim? ¹⁸ "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will happen to the ungodly and the sinner?" ¹⁹ Therefore let them also who suffer according to the will of Yahweh in doing good entrust their souls to Him, as to a faithful Creator.

Notice, Peter said that we shouldn't be surprised when confronted with a fiery trial, as if it were a strange thing – it is for the purpose of testing us (v12). Sadly, many believers aren't really taught this basic principle. Therefore, they don't know how to respond when they find themselves in the midst of the fiery trial.

If we are partakers of Messiah's sufferings, we ought to rejoice, so that at the revelation of His glory in our situation we may also rejoice with exceeding joy (v13). James said it this way – "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you fall into various temptations, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience" (James 1:2-3). If we were delivered immediately from every trial, it wouldn't produce patient endurance in us because we wouldn't have to "walk it out" by faith. But if we can find joy even in the adversity, we will rejoice with exceeding joy in the victory, when His glory is revealed!

The crucible is not a fun place to be, but when we find ourselves in the midst of it, we can take comfort that we are not alone. The Son is there with us, and He will preserve us, loose us from our bonds, deliver us, and promote us. He is faithful who promised (Hebr. 10:23); He will never give us more than we can handle (1 Cor. 10:13) – IF we trust in Him, commit ourselves to Him, and never give up!

Yahweh's Feast Calendar – 2012

We understand that people have different understandings of Yahweh's calendar. These are the feast dates for 2012 as observed by Lion of Judah Family Worship Center:

Passover*	Apr. 5 th (Thu.)
Days of Unleavened Bread	Apr. 6 th – 12 th (Fri. – Thu.)
Pentecost	May 27 th (Sun.)
Trumpets	Sep. 16 th (Su.)
Day of Atonement	Sep. 25 th (Tue.)
Feast of Tabernacles	Sep. 30 th – Oct. 6 th (Su. – Sab.)
Last Great Day	October 7 th (Su.)

** observed the evening before*

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

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