

## ***Strive versus Try***

The Ten Commandments are in our hearts. If you violate any of them, you will be judged according to how you do it, whether you do it deliberately. If you have done it, broken any of the commandments, you have broken the covenant — putting anything ahead of Him, having hate or anger towards someone, etc. The only way it can be forgiven is by confessing and renouncing it. If we have come to the knowledge of the truth and we go on and deliberately sin, there is nothing left but the fearful expectation of judgment. Like Esau — even though he wept, he could not repent. Like Judas — he cried, but he could not repent. It is the same for us. If we sinned deliberately, we would not be able to repent.

So, if we sing His name and we are thinking about something else, we have broken the commandment, we have spoken His name in vain. We have to see where we are, how we stack up against the word. We must know who we are as a covenanted people. It says in the word that, “You draw near with your lips but are far away in your heart.” That is something that God hates. It is detestable to Him, an abomination. It shows our heart is far away from Him because no matter how good our minds are, it does not enter in through the veil. Only if it is from the heart does it enter in through the veil. It has to be a spiritual worship. That is what He is seeking, those who worship in Spirit and truth. He is not seeking those who worship with their lips and their minds only, but spiritual worshippers, only those who strive to enter with their heart. Many will strive with their mind — mental agility — but only those who have a heart to obey Him will He give eternal life to.

And so when those, to whom He has given eternal life, break the covenant, they are cut to the heart and they repent. They are those who belong to Him. But those who do not belong to Him will be judged along with the world, when the world is judged, and they will be found out to not even have eternal life. Then not only will they face the first

death, agonizing there that they did not agonize here on earth to enter through the narrow door of the heart, but then, when the world is judged, they will be judged with the world. Since they claimed to see and they really do not see, their guilt will remain upon them — there will be no let-up to their torment day and night forever and ever. It is a serious thing to be in the Body, claiming to see, and yet not striving to enter through the narrow door, breaking the covenant and not even knowing it, becoming callous to the word, not fearing.

Who does our Father focus His attention on? Those who tremble at His word (Isa 66:2), those with a broken and contrite heart. To those He looks with compassion and mercy. We want to be people who take His name on our lips only when it comes forth from our heart. We do not even let our Master's name be spoken unless it comes forth with meaning from our heart. Anything else is breaking the commandment.

Ps 9:10 — *“Those who know your name,”* those who know you, they know your name. Your name is who you are. So to know your name means to know the essence of you. They know who you are — they know you. If you know your husband's name, your children's names, that is who they are. Our Master's name is who He is. He came as the salvation of YHWH, powerful to save. Yahshua is the manifestation of YHWH's character. His people pray to Him by calling on His name. YHWH saves by His name. His name is now manifested in Yahshua. We know that He saves those who seek for Him. *“For you, Adonai, have never forsaken those who seek you.”* Of course, if we do not seek Him, we forsake Him and He will forsake us like He did with Solomon.

In Jn 14:7 our Master says, “If you really knew me, Philip, you would know my Father as well. And from now on, you do know Him and have seen Him.” If you really knew me, you would know my Father. Philip said, “Master, show us the Father. That'll be enough for us.” And our Master answered, “Don't you know me, Philip, after all the time I have been with you? Don't you know Me?” “Show us the Father.” “Have I been with you such a long time and you don't know me?” Who is speaking in verse 9? “Have

I been with you such a long time and you don't know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words you hear me speak to you are not my own, but the Father in me, He works in me, through me. The Father who is in me is speaking to you." You can only know the Father in Him, in our Master Yahshua. The Father is *in* Him. In Jn 14 it talks about the Father and coming to know the Father. He is *in* our Master Yahshua, the wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting Father. We know that the Father is in Yahshua. The only way we can get to the Father is *in* Yahshua. The Father is in Him.

Our Master said, "*Let the little children come to me,*" showing us that He was the Father, that the Father was in Him. It is a mystery how the Father, Son, and the Spirit is one God who is three distinct personalities. It says, "*If you obey my words, we will come and make our abode with you.*"

In Lk 13:24, What is the narrow *door*? This is a metaphor.

Pr 17:17 — "*A friend loves at all times but a brother is born for adversity.*" That is a state of hardship. If you are a brother, you are born to have hardship, that is, if you have passed out of death and into life. A brother or sister is born for adversity, a state of hardship or affliction, which it takes to be a brother, because certainly we have to forbear. It says that we know we have passed out of death into life because we forbear with our brother, love our brother as our Master loved us. Our Master forbore with us. We have to forbear with our brothers regardless of their outward ways. The same goes with a wife or a husband — they are born for adversity in a lot of ways; born to endure hardship with one another. To forbear with one another is to love as He loved us. Forbearing with your brother could be the narrow door — continuing to love one another. A friend loves at all times. A brother (same as a friend) is born for adversity. Thus you can see what love is. In 1 Cor 13 you see that love is patient when wronged. You are patient because that is your friend. Your friend forbears with you, loves you at

all times. 1 Cor 13:4-7 — A friend loves at all times, forbears, hardly even notices when someone does it wrong. A brother is able to strive to enter through that narrow door of loving and forbearing because he believes. A false brother cannot enter that door since that is how we know that we passed out of death and into life — because we love our brothers.

You see two words in Lk 13:24 — *strive* and *try*. These are our Master's words. “*Strive to enter through the narrow door, because many will try to enter but will not be able... He will answer them, ‘I do not know you or where you are from.’*” He did not know them. He did not recognize Himself in them. “*Then you will say, ‘Well, we ate and drank with you and you taught in our streets.’*” (If we apply that now we could say, “Well, we came to the morning and evening sacrifices, we ate and participated in community.”) But He replied, “*Go away from me; I don’t know you; you are evil.*” Not because you did real bad things, but because you were trying to enter the narrow door in the flesh, you were trying, but you were not able to enter. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when we see all our brothers and sisters going in and we are left out.

There is a marked difference between the words *strive* and *try* in the way that our Master spoke these words. Those who have believed and obey can *strive* and *try* in the way that our Master spoke these words. Those who have believed and obey can *strive* with the heart. Those who have believed and did not obey can only *try*. They believed only in their mind; their belief did not go into their heart so that they could obey; their belief did not go to the heart to make them obey. It did not really get right down to the essence of the person. It did not stay in their innermost part, so therefore their soul was not affected, their heart was not affected resulting in salvation. Like the person who believed in our Master, but because of the fear of the Pharisees, he did not confess His name — his belief did not cause him to obey.

So those who entered, entered because they *agonized* to enter. Those who did not enter merely *sought* to enter. The words *seek* and *strive* are very similar outwardly,

but inwardly they are antagonistic, they are different from one another. Let us see the difference between *strive* and *try*.

Many *try* to stay awake but they cannot do it because their heart is not in it. *Strive* is talking about a struggle. We have to struggle to enter through the narrow door. We have to struggle with the afflictions that our Father has allowed us to have in our life. Everyone has certain afflictions. Some people have greater afflictions than others. We are afflicted with many things. In Ps 119:67,75-78 it talks about affliction, how affliction is good.<sup>1</sup>

There are many things that we are afflicted with, in our personalities, in our physical makeup, in our mental makeup, in our emotional makeup. We are spiritually afflicted, emotionally afflicted; we were born in and came out of a fallen world and we are fallen people, so therefore the way we think poses an affliction to us, a struggle. We have to compete with it every day in the Spirit — things we think, perversions we learned in the world.

The word *strive* here means to struggle as to compete for a prize so highly valued that you take all that you have, all of your endeavors, to enter through the door. If you do not see it as a prize, you will not enter through the door. You will be cast out if you do not see it as a highly-prized thing. (If you go to sleep during the teaching, merely trying to stay awake but your heart is not in it, so therefore your body is not in it.) You will be cast out if you were not striving to enter through the narrow door. In the Greek, the word used there means, “as to compete for a prize; to contend with an adversary; to endeavor, fight, labor fervently.” That is the definition of the word that He meant when He said *strive*. To *strive* is to compete for a prize, and that prize has to be the object of all your endeavors. Our Master is our prize. We contend with an adversary, the evil one, and our flesh, and the afflictions that we have. You know what

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<sup>1</sup> Also see page 9.

your afflictions are, what you are afflicted with. To inflict affliction means to inflict physical or mental abuse, to cause grievous distress. Affliction is a condition of pain or stress wherever it is in your personality, whether physical, emotional, mental, etc.

So that is what *strive* means.

Now for the word *try*. It says, "*Strive to enter through the narrow gate. Many will try but will not be able.*" They are making an endeavor, an attempt; they are seeking; they are trying to overcome; they are seeking to draw near. Many will *try* but will not be able. It is a mystery that He spoke here because it seems like almost the same word. But why would a person not be able to enter if he tried? "*I tried!*" he will say, but he will be cast out where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Our Master is a righteous judge. "I'm trying! What else do you want me to do?" some may say. So they seek to enter, they do draw near, but they draw near with their mind and their mouth, but not with their heart and their mouth. There is a difference between drawing near with your mind and drawing near with your heart. They try to do it with their mind; they try to get through that narrow door, but it is not with their heart.

The word *try* in this context means to worship God in a bad way. Remember the verse in Jer 29:13, about drawing near to God with your mouth, but your heart is far away from Him? So, to *try* is to worship God, but in a bad sense. To *try* is to plot, to scheme. You plot in your endeavors; you seek to get in through your own human nature, to bring your human nature to a point that it looks good enough to enter. You embellish it, ennoble it, trying to make your human nature better and better and better — you are living by principles, so actually you are under the law.

Christians live under the law. The word is like law to them; they are under the law because they are not under grace. They do it with their flesh and not with their heart since their heart has not been redeemed. They are trying to become perfect in many ways, becoming Pharisees. But it is the Pharisees He was talking to when He said, "When you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom

of God and you yourself are thrown out...” The Pharisees outwardly were impeccable, almost. So those who *try* merely confess their sins, but do not forsake them. They seek to get in through their own strength, trying to get better by principles, just like Christians and Pharisees. And that is the whole context here; that is what He is trying to teach. There is a parallel between the Christians and Pharisees. Our Master knew that the Christians would come up in the last days and we would need this parallel about the Pharisees.

But we can be the Pharisees if we merely try, like they do. To *try* is to seek after by the means of their own fleshly endeavors. They *try*. Many will *try* but will not be able.

In Lk 14:26-33 and in many other places, it talks about not being *able*. We are either able or not able. What are you? Are you able or not able? If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, yes, even his own life, is not *able* to be my disciple. Such a person is not given the enablement of the Holy Spirit. Do you understand that? [You are not an evangelist if you do not know this, if you are not listening, or if you have anything else on your mind while we talk about these things. Philip, not the disciple Philip, but the other Philip was an evangelist.]

“*Anyone who comes to me and does not... is not able to be my disciple.*” It is because he is not given the enablement of the Holy Spirit unless he forsakes his life and everything else that would stand in the way of him being a disciple. That is the prize. You have to see the prize. Of course, in Lk 14:28, he is not able to finish it. And in verse 31, before a king sets out to conquer another king, will he not first sit down and consider if he is able, in his flesh, to do it? Some say, “Yes, I’m going to *TRY* to defeat that King that is coming.” And when we try to enter into the kingdom, that is what we are doing, we are fighting against Him by the flesh. That is why He will not know us when we see Him, if we have done that. In the same way, anyone who does not give

up all of his own possessions is not able to be my disciple. Why? Because he does not have faith to do it. He simply does not have faith.

And how do you strive? You strive with faith. And where does faith come from? By hearing. That is why it is necessary to hear. So those who *try* will not be able. Why not? Because they do not have faith. Unless you have faith, you cannot receive the Holy Spirit. If we have the Holy Spirit we can strive to enter through that narrow door of loving your brothers and forbearing with them.

So *enablement* is ability from the Holy Spirit, not from the flesh. You might have great agility in your intellectual mind — you can learn things, take in things and pass on things, and in that way try to enter the narrow door. But you are not going to be able. It is going to come to an end one day and you are going to find that your natural abilities falter. You are working against God, trying to enter through that door in your own strength. You may have great agility in mind and emotions, but you will not be able. Many people have come in with their own agility — they are smooth, they run the move, they know how to dodge really well, they know how to go around things.

1 Pet 4:11 — Our Master says, “Don’t you realize that the Father is speaking through Me? That the Father is in Me? That when you hear Me you hear the Father?” The Father is not somewhere else, separate from Yahshua. But the Father is *in* Him. If you want to know the Father, you are going to know Him *in* Yahshua. To get to the Father you have to go *in* Yahshua. You have to go through Him, inside of Him. Whoever is baptized is baptized into Messiah, where His Father is. If you want to be saved and be reconciled to the Father, you have to go into Messiah. He is not a stepping stone to the Father, where you step up on Him and then you get to the Father. You have to go into Him and meet the Father there inside of Him. That is where you love the Father. That is where you love the Son. That is where you love the Spirit. That is where those three are one. They live in us, who obey His commandments. That

is the only way to strive to get into the narrow door. That is the only way He will know us.

1 Pet 4:8-11 — No matter how mentally alert you are, you are not able. No matter how much driving force you have in your own ability, one cannot strive in the Spirit without faith. That is why it says that without faith it is impossible to please Him. Faith only comes by hearing and continuing to hear throughout your life. Many start but they are not able; they quit hearing, they quit receiving faith. No matter how quick and clever we are with our own mind, we may try and try and try. But it says that later we will cry and cry and cry. Try and try and cry and cry. That is what our Master said — weeping and gnashing our teeth because we are shut out, because we did not earnestly strive, endeavor with the power that He gives us, but instead we tried in our own strength. We must strive. Striving throughout all, with all of our afflictions that we have in our body, our soul, our personality that we must deal with daily. You know what your afflictions are.

### **Afflictions**

Ps 119:67 — “Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I obey Your word.”  
Verse 71 — “It was good for me to be afflicted that I might learn your heart, that I might learn what you want me to do.” Verse 75-78 — May the arrogant be put to shame, who try to do it in their own strength. If we are *trying*, we are always going to hate others because we cannot do it any different in our own strength. But we are going to love if we are doing it by His strength. Our brother is that narrow gate. The way we treat our brothers and sisters is the way we think about our Master Yahshua.

**Chetz Barur:** I want to learn to strive by His grace, not trying to duke it out when adverse circumstances come.

**Abel:** I see how sometimes we're self-afflicted. I think, “Why didn't I judge myself and cry out for grace?” But then I look back and hate myself. I see that as part of the affliction. That's learning the hard way through affliction.

**ha-emeq:** To strive you have to have faith. And faith comes by hearing. So if we hear, then we have faith and then we do it. If you humble yourself then you're going to receive faith. Then you can strive. Only a humble person is going to be able to strive. Humble yourself, receive faith, and then you can strive. I don't want to find out later that I've been running the wrong race the whole time, trying and trying and trying but not even running on the right track.

Lk 13:24 — There is a difference between *trying* and *striving*. Those who merely *try* will give up because of unbelief. Those who *strive* will not give up because they believe. Many will try. Few will strive. Striving means you use all your strength.

**Grace:** The task that is set before us is so vast. It is so vast to think that in three generations that we could actually produce from our seed a generation that would not have even one lie in their mouth, not even *one* lie, not one tiny bit of guile or the least little thing that comes in their heart that colors something just a *little* bit to make yourself look just a little bit better. And then we will send those 144,000 out and they'll be perfectly pure, absolutely spotless. And that has never, ever, ever been done. And to think that we could do it, for us to try to do that, we'd be fools. We'd never ever be able to do that. But our Father has great wisdom how he planned all the things that would come before us that we would have to rise up to before we could see that come about. And the only way we could possibly ever measure up to those things is to strive, strive, strive, strive. Because if you try, you'll eventually give up. You'll say, "I tried so hard; I did the *best* I could. And that's it; that's all I have to offer. It didn't match up." But the only way that we'll make it is to strive. Because if we strive by His strength, we won't give up — we may fail, but we won't give up. We'll strive and strive and strive and strive and strive until we attain the goal — because we've been granted faith.

**Tohorah:** If I just try to do something there's still a little bit of negativity in me, not knowing for sure if I can do it. But if I strive, there is no end. I'm going to strive until I do it.

Salmon strive. They say, "If we don't, we're going to be extinct, we won't exist anymore." So therefore they have a natural instinct. They know the prize they're striving for. We have to see the prize.

The violent take the kingdom by force.

**Ben Nabiy:** We can do all things through Him who strengthens us. I saw affliction in a different way today. The afflictions we have are a *good* thing because it keeps our heart in a humble place of crying out for our God to deliver us. The very afflictions that were meant to destroy us are what is molding our heart to Yahshua. He's the one we are waiting on the dock for. We're going to wait because He's given us the faith to stand on that dock. I took hope in what I heard here. It's because our Master is with us that we are being afflicted. In Isaiah it says that someday we're going to look for our enemies and not be able to find them because they're going to be dealt with. We *can't* do it on our own strength. But with His strength we can do all things. It's according to how we love Him.

**Hakam:** This cuts off a major voice the evil one uses to accuse us. Because if you are afflicted you can be easily accused by the evil one that you better do something about it to make yourself different or else God is not going to accept you. That's the way the natural evil tendency in man thinks. But the reality of the Father is in the Son and the reality of the Son is in the Body and the reality of the Spirit is in your brothers. If we weren't afflicted we'd try to go to some father who is not in the Son — since we were doing good — and all it is is self-righteousness. The evil one accuses us to get us to try to be self-righteous, that all you can do is try to get better. Our Father is on a whole different level. His heart is that He would afflict us so we would depend on Him. I can get hold of that. We're on the foundation of love, of serving, of giving, because we have eternal life. So in the Body our Father uses affliction to cause us to have compassion on each other. But the evil one uses it to make us try to make ourselves better and then, of course, give up. But the true Father uses it to make us compassionate on our brother because we know what's in us. So if we're in that realm, there is no room for accusation, and no reason to make us loose heart. Our Father is faithful to not give us any grace to overcome our affliction by getting better.

That's what is going to distinguish who serves Him and who doesn't, as it says in Mal 3:18. It's not going to be like a fire that came down from the mountain. That fire from the mountain is the true God that lives in the Body, who dwells in His people.

**Leviyah:** The narrow door is how we treat our brothers and sisters, how we're making it every day, now. We'll know if we're making it or missing it and be put back on the right path.

That is where He commands the blessing — eternal life — where the oil goes to the edge of the robe, everyone receiving grace, loving as He commanded. That is where He commands eternal life, where His love is perfected in us. Paul said (2 Cor 12:7-9), *“I received a thorn of flesh to afflict me, to keep me humble...”* And though he pleaded that it be removed, our Father said, *“My grace is sufficient for you.”* When you wake up to the fact that we have a messenger of Satan, then you can see where your temptation is coming from, you can see what is going on in your life, and that He has given you grace to overcome it.