

January 1995

Training at Tabitha's Place

*(Letter from Yakob)*

Thank you for your letters. We are always so encouraged to hear from you the good news that is happening over in Judah. I know we have embarked on the narrow way. This way is narrow, with just as much pressure as we can handle. Our Father doesn't want us to be at ease, just having a good and nice community which functions well. His desire is that we do his will and are being saved. As long as we are being saved He can add to us those who are sent by Him. We desperately need to hear from Him every morning and evening in order that we don't perish and fall into a form or a clergy system. The responsibility is on each single one of us.

After I was training here for three years now, I became household head for eight months. During this time I believe training suffered much. Now we have taken on the faith of you brothers in Judah and are training all the children together in two rooms — about 50 children. No longer do I take care of the household affairs, but I'm totally set aside only for the children. My faithful wife is supporting me in this as much as she can. She does the handwriting with the children.

Huyadah is doing the French, and Miriam also for the younger groups, and Amittai is the assistant Rabbi to me. He is one day going to be the covering here in Tabitha's Place.

Every morning we take all the children together and we have a whole hour of just proverbs, from 9 to 10 o'clock. All the children from 6 to 15 gather in Tabitha's Place dining room and listen to the proverbs. We go with each day of the calendar and the children prepare each one a proverb out of this chapter and learn it by heart. The goal is not to be totally perfect knowing it, but with the younger children we help, not wanting to quench their interest. Also with the younger 6 and 7-year-olds, it bonds them to their parents since they need their help to learn it. My emphasis in training is absolutely the Word, and this has borne good fruit so far.

Every day of training they prepare a proverb and write it in their proverb books, including the little children (6-year-olds). Then we begin our training. I don't allow the children to play around with any of their utensils or with their Bibles, nor to look anywhere else except to the person who prepared the proverb or the teacher who is speaking. (Children can't give themselves to two things — wondering mind.) Sometimes, at the beginning, I had to take half to three quarters of the children out to discipline them, but now it has changed a lot (some still need discipline). If anyone does not want to give his heart to the discipline, I don't let him participate in training unless he changes and wants to receive. They all know that it is a privilege to be in training and to learn during this time.

All the children and youth are eager to have this time together. The children are raising their hands to want to share their proverb. Training has begun after I admonish them with something of the scriptures. They know it's serious and are giving all their attention to gain insight by what is shared. As I talk, I see who is fixed — who put his focus on me and who hasn't. The time has drawn near to imprint something on their little hearts. The only thing that is to be imprinted is our Master's word. As those are yet wandering with their minds, we discipline them. Then the first one starts sharing his proverb loud and clear. I admonish them to speak loudly, overcome their intimidation, their worthlessness. I just love them, trying to get the best possible out of them.

As the proverb and the wisdom of that child is shared, I normally share about the proverb and take examples from the Old Covenant. Telling them a story, for example, about Proverbs 14:1. Take the wife of Ahaz as an example for someone who tore her house down. Or I bring in the daily problems they have with each other, share about their relationships with one another,

opening their hearts to avoid exclusive relationships, talking bad about others, let teachings flow in. I try to make a vivid impression on them in order to cause them to relate differently toward one another, pointing them back to have a relationship with their parents, using Rehoboam's bad example of relating to other youth instead of relating to their parents and teachers, letting them search for the wisdom of the adults, teaching them about death in their conscience — if they do things and feel that pain of guilt in their heart — teaching them to judge themselves.

I ask sometimes who honestly didn't give all his heart to listen and focus on training and willingly after admonishing them they went, sometimes half the classroom, to their discipline. Individually I speak to them how wonderful it is that they allow their conscience to be a law to them that they don't want to transgress and stand up with what they know, not wanting to hide their state of guilt.

I see that the spoken word is very important to the children. Every evening after the sacrifice time is just given to the children to share as a continuation of the sacrifice what they heard. They share their proverb and what spoke to their hearts. It is a wonderful time. There is a lot of sparkling and crackling going on and it encourages everybody because they know they don't want to share just something out of their head, but really from their heart. We talked about a sacrifice of fools — we want to establish the proper fear with the children about the sacrifices. We also want to learn all together from things which happened in the Edah.

It encourages very much the children to give their all. They desire to share at the sacrifices and listen carefully for this reason to what they hear in training. Even for the rest of the day they have something put in their heart to feed on to judge themselves properly. They know this time they are living is not a time for playing or doing things for themselves. They know they can only grow if they have a good conscience. There is no prospering without this. It's also a serious time for the teacher. It's the time to imprint something proper into the children — seeing the things in their life, being a friend and helping them to change in their problems which they have to deal with in their little personalities. They know they are the builders.

We as the stem have the wonderful opportunity to spend as much time as possible to imprint into them the tools, vision, and materials to build the temple. The word of God is the only word that never gets tiresome to hear; it's good for instruction and teaching. I see that their souls need the input of the word in order to grow up as children who learn to judge themselves in their daily situations. The word is brought to them giving them the proper knowledge and imprint on their hearts to learn how to judge themselves. Without them having vision and without the encouragement of the scriptures, being obedient to the commandments, they will never arrive at the goal we have set for them to be at the bar Mizvah. They know this is the time in childhood for being prepared for the bar Mizvah. They know it's coming and it's the time now to judge their motives and intentions of their hearts.

In training we want to teach them to fear our Father's word; they know it's serious and they are being reminded of this every day. They look forward to learning to judge themselves. They know when they didn't pay attention; they willingly give themselves to their discipline.

We need to make a vivid impression in their hearts. They are thankful for it. It's their desire to be clean and to give their all. Also in the afternoons as they work they know that they don't want to bring a sacrifice of fools to our Father, having learned from Amaz's example (who was lawless and disobedient). The children increase also this way in the sacrifice, singing with all their hearts and sharing with a loud voice.