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CONSIDER THE SALMON

I recently spoke with a lady who is distressed concerning her son. He was born in the faith knowing the true names, the Sabbaths, the laws of Yahweh, etc. He commented that he was so tired of being in the minority. While he did appreciate the truths wherein he was born and simply can't turn his back on now, he wishes that he had been born into a large family, preferably Catholic, so that he would be ignorant of the truths that he has and go on to live life like everyone else, hoping that his chance for salvation and the kingdom and eternal life would come in the second resurrection.

By Jerry Healan

Any of us who are in the faith who have children, can understand this situation. Our children have been born into families who have the truth of the Scriptures to lead them. It does place pressures and situations on our children that others don't seem to face. Some do resent the family's calling into the truth and refuse to walk in it when they become adults. But let's face it, no matter where we have been born and in what condition, there are always problems to face.

Does being born in ignorance help? While large families may seem to be ideal and going along with the majority may seem to be like the way to go, the simple truth of the matter is that large families have their problems also. Pecking orders can be established. Jealousies can also come into play. Such was the case with Jacob and his twelve sons, is it not? Weren't they all so jealous of their younger brother Joseph that the older sons wanted to kill him?

Look at the jealousies that came into play between Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, the sons of Israel, etc. What about Cain and Abel? It would be better for us all to come to realize that we are born in a very imperfect world; that wherever we look, there are good things and bad things, righteousness and evil. We have a struggle on our hands no matter who we are.

Yes, it is difficult for minorities. Yes, it

is difficult for children who are born into families of those practicing and embracing Biblical truths. Yahshua did say that many are called, few are chosen. The few must continue to realize who they are and live accordingly. Those who are called to the truths of Yahweh need to keep in mind that they are so tremendously blessed. They don't have to wander about in this world, being tossed to and fro on every whim. They don't have to wander around in the darkness living life in hopelessness.

I remember at a very early age wondering how I got here; where I came from; why I am here. I remember, as a young man, just wanting a job to work at to make money for sustenance and, of course, to become wealthy. I remember working on several jobs, and getting frustrated because it seemed that I was getting nowhere. I remember thinking, is this all life is about? We are born in this world, mature to adulthood, go to work, work until retirement (if we live long enough), retire for a few short years and then die. Surely there is more to this existence than that! If evolution is true, that's all there is. Woe unto us!

But there is a Creator! He has, for some reason, blessed us by singling us out to come to know Him, to live differently than the average world citizen, to have faith in Him, and to eventually in-



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herit His glorious kingdom! Hallelu-Yah!!!!

As the song goes, Count Your Blessings, name them one by one, count your many blessings, see what Yah has done! For those who don't appreciate our calling, they simply don't understand what we are called to. We are called to be a part of Yahweh's Kingdom. We are being called to nobility. We must understand that we are in training. We must understand that this life is hopeless and useless because no matter how great or wealthy or happy we may be in this life, it all perishes! As King Solomon proclaimed, "All is vanity."

No matter how rich we become; no matter how powerful we become; no matter how famous we become it will never be enough. Are the rich ever satisfied with what they have? Absolutely not! They always want to accumulate more and more riches. Are the powerful ever satisfied with what power they possess? Absolutely not! They always want more power. Are the famous ever satisfied with their fame? Absolutely not! You see, no matter how rich, how powerful, how famous you become, there is always someone else that is richer, more powerful and/or more famous than you. Besides, even if you reach the top, in this world, you must struggle to stay there because there are many, many challengers who will come up against you.

There are challenges to life. Nothing is really easy. Whether we are in the majority or in the minority, there are problems and troubles that we have to face. What we need to realize is that this life is for a purpose and if we don't ful-

fill that purpose that our Creator has called us to, then we are failures. He doesn't leave us helpless. He is there to help in every time of need.

THE SALMON

There are many excellent examples for us to look to in Yahweh's great creation; examples of life, struggles, failure, success. One of those examples for us to learn valuable lessons from is that of the salmon. The salmon, of course, are hatched from eggs laid in a certain stream, creek, river, etc. The first stage in a salmon's life is that of a fry. A fry is a newly hatched salmon, just like we are a newborn baby when we first come into this world. The fry quickly develop into the next stage which is called "parr" just like our second stage is childhood.

The Salmon remain in the "parr" stage for about one to three years. They remain in the stream where they were hatched until they become large enough to enter into the third stage of their growth. This is much like our own nursery, kindergarten and elementary education.

The next stage is called the "smolt." This is the stage wherein they travel downstream to gather into brackish water in order to become accustomed to the salty seawater. They go through a phenomenon called "osmoregulation" which prepares their body for this change. This stage seems to be like our own teenage and young adult years wherein we go through high school and even college, which prepares us to enter into the working world.

Finally, they are adult enough to en-



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ter the salty waters of the great oceans where they feed themselves to final adulthood. In one to five years the salmon are ready to make their famous trek back to their place of nativity to reproduce in order to keep their species alive.

What is amazing about the salmon is that of the hundreds of thousands and maybe even millions that hatch out, only about ten percent (10%) make it to the sea. Then an even greater number surely succumbs to the dangers of the sea itself.

THE CALLING

After about one to five years in the sea, they suddenly feel the call to return to their home. Even though there are great numbers of salmon that begin the trek back to their breeding grounds, just think about what has already happened to the majority that were originally hatched out! The majority of those hatched out never made it to the point of being called back to the hatchery, their home. If you were a salmon, what group would you rather be in? Would you rather be in the majority or the minority? I think that the answer is pretty clear. What about our own situation in today's world? Do you think that being in the minority might begin to have some benefits?

Just think about what Yahshua related, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," Mt. 7:13-14.

Boy! Doesn't that sound like the

plight of the salmon? Many are hatched into this world, but only ten percent of those hatched make it down the stream and into the sea. And going downstream is the broad and easy way, isn't it?

Yahshua was asked, "Then said one unto him, Master, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Master, Master, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of Elohim, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of Elohim," Lk. 13:23-29.

This is our destiny. This is what we are born for. The Kingdom of Elohim is for those of us who have been called in this day and age and it is also for our children if they will resist the pulls of this world and resist going along with the majority taking the seemingly easy way out.

THE JOURNEY

The journey back to their place of birth is no picnic for the salmon. The journey to the Kingdom of Elohim is no picnic for the believer. But one thing that the salmon has that can be an inspiring example to us is



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their determination.

It is believed that the salmon can detect their place of origin through the sense of smell. For them and us, the sense of smell comes through the nose into which also we breath the breath of life. Interestingly, the Hebrew word for breath is *ruach*, which is also the word for *spirit*. The Greek word for breath is *pneuma*, which is also the same word for spirit.

The salmon receives the calling and spirit to direct it back home. Yahweh calls us and gives us His Spirit in order to direct us to His kingdom, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Yahshua the Messiah for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as Yahweh our Elohim shall call,” Acts 2:38-39.

The salmon searches and finds the entrance to his stream of nativity. We have a door that is opened to us and that door is Yahshua the Messiah, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Yahshua unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. Then said Yahshua unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep,” Jn. 10:1-7.

As the salmon begins its journey, one of the major things that it must do is travel

upstream, going against the current. We have to do the same thing. Once we are called, we simply can’t allow ourselves to be carried downstream along with the rest of society. We must buck the trends and go against the current.

A stream, creek or river flows downward, but the salmon must swim upstream always against the current. Sometimes there may be refreshing pools of water along the way that only issue a gentle pull, which can be a resting place, a respite, similar to the Sabbath and annual holy days. But there are also churning dangerous rapids and worse than that, there are waterfalls. The salmon has to find the strength and courage to not only force its way against the rapids and other areas where the stream flows hard, but it has to climb the waterfalls. Sometimes they have to make attempt, after attempt, after attempt before they make it over the top.

What about us? We are not without our trials, problems, streams to swim, waterfalls to jump over, mountains to climb. The salmon has a big heart because it is determined to make it against all of the odds. Do we have the heart to make it? Not without Yahweh and Yahshua, of course! But when they are for us, what or who can be against us?

Yahshua told us, “If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you,” Jn. 14:15-18.

Everyone knows that if we keep Yahweh’s commandments, we are setting ourselves up against the world, which not only doesn’t keep His commandments, but



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hates, persecutes and despitefully uses those who do. But Yahshua said that He wouldn't leave us comfortless. He promised to send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, which will enable us to overcome.

Maybe Yahweh ingrained determination in the salmon just for us to see. Maybe He gave the salmon the spirit to take comfort each time it fails to make it over the top of a waterfall. Maybe the salmon just takes a momentary rest after each failure long enough to be comforted and encouraged to try it again, and again, and again because they just don't give up and neither should we.

OTHER OBSTACLES

If that isn't enough, there are other obstacles to overcome and endure. There are fishermen, bears and eagles who hungrily and eagerly anticipate the salmon run so they can eat their fill; so many of the salmon fall prey to these dangers.

But do the salmon cringe with horror at the fisherman's net or hook, or the bear's paw or fangs, or the eagle's claw? Absolutely not. Why? They have a great goal! The greatest goal for them is to make it back to their place of origin so they can reproduce. They don't turn tail and run. They are afraid of nothing! Their goal must be accomplished in spite of the consequences to many in their numbers.

What about our goals? What are your goals? Is your goal just to quit school and enter the job market so you can make money? I have known many who have done just that and I haven't found any of them who was proud or happy with what they did.

Is your goal just to get out of high school and make it into the job market with that minimal training? Whether you want to believe this or not, most of us hate knowledge and the work that it takes to ac-

quire it. We have to read, study and cram our heads with facts and figures that we just don't see how those things will help us later in life. But they do!

Is your goal to go to college in order to receive advanced education and training for a special field? That is also well and good. Advanced education does better prepare one to live in this world.

But what happens when you have accomplished your goals, found a job, built a family, a house, a career, a life? Is there anything else that you need? Yes, absolutely! Whether you realize it or know it or not, you will need spiritual fulfillment and satisfaction.

Yahshua cautioned, "From that time forth began Yahshua to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Master: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of Elohim, but those that be of men. Then said Yahshua unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Mt. 16:21-26.

Look at Yahshua's example! He had a set goal in mind. That goal was to do the will of His Father, to call certain ones out of this world and teach them the good news of the kingdom of heaven, to suffer for it and for us and to return where He came from victorious!



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Yes, what if you abound so much that you gain the whole world! A very rich, powerful and prosperous man is so taken with his possessions, his fortune, etc., that he has little time for anything else! He has no time to focus on the Kingdom of Heaven.

What about us? Are we so taken with our daily lives, our daily activities that we lose our focus on the thing that is most vital to us? Our purpose is to follow in Yahshua's footsteps proclaiming the Kingdom of Elohim. Our purpose is to make ourselves ready for the greatest position that any person born of women could ever have or hold!

Let's focus on the life and determination of the salmon. Let's learn the vital lessons from them and the suffering that they must go through in order to triumph and

get the victory. Let's also focus on the life of our Savior, King, and High Priest, Yahshua the Messiah! He never allowed anything to deter Him from His goals. He suffered and died for them!

Is your life important? Is your calling important? Are you willing to suffer and die for it? Are you willing to be one of the few, or do you want to be of the many? The many don't make it in the salmon's world nor in the world of our calling. If you have been called or if your parents have been called, don't run around with a woe is me attitude. That which you have been called to is far too precious. It is worth giving your all. May Yahweh bless you to understand!

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