

Notes: June 6, 2020

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Jeri - Drash
8. Praise and Worship Songs
9. Message
10. Aaronic Blessing
11. Kiddush
12. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe

English: May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe

Transliteration: Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.

English: May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

Introduction: Undone vs. Well Done

Over the last three months specifically we have been confronted with a great deal as a nation. From a pandemic resulting in stay at home orders and the shuttering of our economy leading into racial unrest as the result of the death of George Floyd, this is all we have been hearing about. Several of you have shared your experiences with me during this time and just how overwhelming at times it has been.

Whether you have asked this question during this time or at any time in your journey as a believer we still take the circumstances that surround us, attempting to understand them.

That question that so many believers have asked...and I emphasise believers here is...

“Where is God?”

Trying to make sense of the culture and the chaos that has surrounded it, the chaos, the emotional response, some will ask where is the God of Love?

Interesting, this past week I received a call from my brother in Florida. The first words out of his mouth when I returned the call were “Are these the end times?” Taking what was going on over the last 10 days he referenced something he has heard about but knows very little about. My response to him is that they, the end times, have been ongoing. Yet the one thing he didn't ask was “Where is God?” He's getting closer but he isn't there yet.

When their lives are in turmoil some will ask, Where is God?

When the world around us is in turmoil some will ask, Where is God?

Today I want to share with you the path of two people and their journey's with Adonai.

The first is Jon Steingard of Hawk Nelson who recently made public that he no longer believed in God, Jesus. He conveyed it was a decision that did not happen overnight, but over time. Many years of suppressing questions of doubt to where he would question..."God if you are there..." ultimately led to drawing his conclusion.

This is not a sermon of judgment or condemnation but a message that Scripture affirms, that of two paths...

**Mat 7:13** "Go in through the narrow gate; for the gate that leads to destruction is wide and the road broad, and many travel it;

**Mat 7:14** but it is a narrow gate and a hard road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

Sharing a few excerpts from a recent article reporting on his decision, Jon conveys...

*"While labels like that feel kind of icky, they do help sometimes, so I guess I would say agnostic," he said. "I certainly couldn't say for certain that God isn't there. I would prefer it if he was. It feels important for me to leave that door open."*

Ultimately he questioned whether he truly believed everything he was ever taught.

*He continued: "It's just that everything I've experienced, everything I've read, and everything I've discussed with friends and family leads me to a place where I can't honestly say I believe. Continuing to say nothing about that was beginning to feel dishonest."*

The belief is not just about Adonai's existence, but that of Yeshua and everything He has done. Now, Jon cannot truly answer the question of Yeshua, His death, burial and resurrection.

Jon conveys that much of his journey in growing up was based on experience, witnessing many things. Growing up in Toronto Jon's father was a pastor whose church was part of what was called "The Toronto Blessing". Jon had witnessed in growing up many divergent perspectives based on this time period, likely planting seeds of doubt in him at a young age. To where, how many years later he would convey...

*"Eventually I began to feel that since I was public and open with you about my faith before - I should be open about my journey now," he added. "In the past few days, I've spoken with so many people who feel the same things as me, but are terrified to speak up about it. Unspoken doubts and feelings like this are poisonous and corrosive to our hearts - and I hope this encourages people who are working up the courage to be more open and transparent about both their faith and their doubts."*

<https://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/jon-steingard-announcement-no-longer-believes-god>

<https://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/christian-hawk-nelson-band-lead-singer-announcement-instagram>

Here is an interview with Jon where he provides further insight that is not captured in the articles above, where more context to the following is revealed.

Steingard said: "After growing up in a Christian home, being a pastor's kid, playing and singing in a Christian band, and having the word 'Christian' in front of most of the things in my life— I am now finding that I no longer believe in God."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJz1ueinKr4>

Without going into a lot of detail, he conveyed many things that you have likely heard about, at one point or time on your journey. Yet, as a PK and based on his experiences was confronted with many questions and doubts. Did Jon,

as Jeri wrote in her “Curious Minds”, truly experience that Divine Encounter?

So, there is a great deal to unpack and further raises concerns that I have for everyone seeking good foundational teaching, leading to understanding of God's Word. “The Toronto Blessing” did not provide such a foundation but was based more on experience and feeling. A sensory intoxication for the soul. This is another sermon for another day.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toronto\\_Blessing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toronto_Blessing)

How much more the words of Kefa ring true today as they did when he was inspired to write them...

**2Pe 2:1** But among the people there were also false prophets, just as there will be false teachers among you. Under false pretenses they will introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, and thus bring on themselves swift destruction.

**2Pe 2:2** Many will follow their debaucheries; and because of them, the true Way will be maligned.

Based on what I have heard and read from Jon, I believe the true way became maligned for him because his faith has become undone.

He conveys to still be open, so pray for him.

**Psa 23:1** *[A psalm of David:]* Adonai is my shepherd; I lack nothing.

**Psa 23:2** He has me lie down in grassy pastures, he leads me by quiet water,

**Psa 23:3** he restores my inner person. He guides me in right paths for the sake of his own name.

The other person I want to speak about, you all know. You have been impacted by her presence and the lasting effect it will have. I am talking of Grace Matias.

Her diminutive physical stature was anything but imposing, yet her Spiritual stature stood as a giant. When she stood on the Word of Adonai, she conveyed power and strength in such a manner that would captivate those around her. Her Ruach infused presence was not only captivating but infectious.

Out of the blue, after her passing I received an email from Jim, Grace's husband's brother Richard...

Email back please to let me know what all she did for God through your ministry.

Richard (Rick) Matias

This was my response to him...

Grace had a passion and exuberance for Adonai (God) - Yeshua (Jesus) and truly loved Him with all her heart. She may have only stood about four feet but when she stood on the Word of Adonai, she was a giant, much greater than her physical stature. Not only did she have a heart for Adonai but for His people, the Jewish people. I have attached several pictures of her at our congregation over the years.

She was a people person. There are many in the congregation who knew Grace on their Spiritual journeys long before she attended our congregation.

She was a voice - a witness (His witness)

She was a prayer warrior

She was a good and faithful servant.

Her presence was infectious and intoxicating. The joy that she exuded was uplifting and inspirational.

Her greatest gift to us as a congregation was her love and support in that she had a heart for our vision for the congregation.

<http://www.shalommaine.com/vision.htm>

Though her body and health limited her from attending more frequently, we knew she was always with us.

Now she IS with Him.

One thing that seemed to be common about Grace was that she truly went out into the world and shared the Good News. She truly lived according to Yeshua's instruction...

**Mat 28:18** Yeshua came and talked with them. He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

**Mat 28:19** Therefore, go and make people from all nations into talmidim, immersing them into the reality of the Father, the Son and the Ruach HaKodesh,

**Mat 28:20** and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember! I will be with you always, yes, even until the end of the age."

She had a true love for Adonai and believed His Word without reservation. She also loved this congregation. The proof was in her fruit.

Countless times when we had visitors, one of our questions is "How did you hear about us?"

The answer, more times than not..."Grace Matias invited us."

When we were out and about, talking with people and sharing who we were...we would get "we have heard of you through Grace Matias"

Her presence just seemed to be everywhere.

Her love of Adonai was not just lip service but was demonstrated. In loving Adonai she loved others to where Sha'ul's inspired words truly exhibit the embodiment of who Grace is.

**1Co 13:4** Love is patient and kind, not jealous, not boastful,

**1Co 13:5** not proud, rude or selfish, not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs.

**1Co 13:6** Love does not gloat over other people's sins but takes its delight in the truth.

**1Co 13:7** Love always bears up, always trusts, always hopes, always endures.

**1Co 13:8** Love never ends; but prophecies will pass, tongues will cease, knowledge will pass.

**1Co 13:9** For our knowledge is partial, and our prophecy partial;

**1Co 13:10** but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass.

As her days were winding down, her faith grew even more. Her prayer request became more numerous in that she truly believed in the power of prayer.

Her concerns grew for her family. She was truly their Spiritual rock. She was immovable, even in her weakened state.

I called her on Monday May 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:16 am to which I heard the words of another woman in the room saying "Do you want to prepare for heaven now?" Startled at first but she was there to assist Grace. Grace and I spoke for nearly 20 minutes.

Hearing the sound of her breathing and the congestion as she spoke, she was still proclaiming her love Adonai and

her faith in all that Yeshua had done for her.

Then, she paused for a moment and shared with me the following...

I want you to tell the congregation I love them. They have been a blessing to me.

As much as she has blessed us with her presence, her infectious demeanor and her larger than life personality, she wanted me to share just how much we meant to her.

There was one final thing she had conveyed to me, and I believe it is an instruction for the congregation. She said to me...take care of Jim.

Grace was always thinking of others and this rings true until the end.

As our conversation drew to an end she desperately wanted to talk with Jim so we ended our call in order for her to be with Jim, though he could not be there in the room with her.

Grace endured until the end...

**Mat 24:13** But whoever holds out till the end will be delivered.

Now she is with the one she loves, in having completed her service for Him on earth.

**Mat 25:21** His master said to him, 'Excellent! You are a good and trustworthy servant. You have been faithful with a small amount, so I will put you in charge of a large amount. Come and join in your master's happiness!'

Two people on the same path at one point in time, yet one endured through the Power of the Ruach, while the other diverged off that path not trusting in the Word of Adonai.

For His Word is what we have as believers to rely on. If we cannot trust in His Word, then we have nothing.

**Rom 2:7** To those who seek glory, honor and immortality by perseverance in doing good, he will pay back eternal life.

I want to close with Hebrews chapter 3 where the writer shares Moshe's faithfulness to Adonai. Moshe is the pillar of faith in the Jewish community and therefore the standard by which we are to emulate. The writer then brings attention to Yeshua's faith. That He is not the one who resides in the house but is the builder of the house.

**Heb 3:1** Therefore, brothers whom God has set apart, who share in the call from heaven, think carefully about Yeshua, whom we acknowledge publicly as God's emissary and as cohen gadol.

**Heb 3:2** He was faithful to God, who appointed him; just as "Moshe was faithful in all God's house."

**Heb 3:3** But Yeshua deserves more honor than Moshe, just as the builder of the house deserves more honor than the house.

**Heb 3:4** For every house is built by someone, but the one who built everything is God.

**Heb 3:5** Also, Moshe was faithful in all God's house, as a servant giving witness to things God would divulge later.

**Heb 3:6** But the Messiah, as Son, was faithful over God's house. And we are that house of his, provided we hold firmly to the courage and confidence inspired by what we hope for.

**Heb 3:7** Therefore, as the Ruach HaKodesh says, "Today, if you hear God's voice,

**Heb 3:8** don't harden your hearts, as you did in the Bitter Quarrel on that day in the Wilderness when you put God to the test.

**Heb 3:9** Yes, your fathers put me to the test; they challenged me, and they saw my work for forty years!

**Heb 3:10** Therefore, I was disgusted with that generation — I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, they have not understood how I do things';

**Heb 3:11** in my anger, I swore that they would not enter my rest."

**Heb 3:12** Watch out, brothers, so that there will not be in any one of you an evil heart lacking trust, which could lead you to apostatize from the living God!

**Heb 3:13** Instead, keep exhorting each other every day, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you will become hardened by the deceit of sin.

**Heb 3:14** For we have become sharers in the Messiah, provided, however, that we hold firmly to the conviction we began with, right through until the goal is reached.

Grace has reached her goal and would be here today to encourage us to continue through the narrow gate, that is the narrow path.

### **In Memory of Grace Matias**



Torah Dedication - 2015



Passover 2015



March For Israel 2014



Passover 2019



Hanukkah 2018