

TSIYON NEWS

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IS THIS YOU?



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From Elijahu

This week I received an unexpected blessing. One of our Tsiyon partners reached out, requesting a personal phone call. When I called, during our encouraging exchange the disciple on the other end shared that she had a profound encounter with YHWH, receiving direction for her life — and in that encounter, He mentioned me. I believe the context of that mention was as an example of a point He was making to her. He said, *“Elijahu went through the fire and then died three times,*

and yet he did not turn aside from his mission.” She told me He had instructed her to share that with me — the reason she contacted me. Without going into a long story about the fire and my ‘three deaths’, I can say this: by His power, each of those setbacks became victories, for which He alone deserves the credit.

Of course, I feel humbled and blessed that He noticed my choice to keep serving as long as I have breath, and that He used that as an example to bless another disciple. He is so good. The truth is, I only did what I ought to have done in the things He mentioned. I’m just an imperfect person like everyone else, having made my share of mistakes. But that’s the whole point, isn’t it? That He can take imperfect people like you and me, and by His power, raise us up in extraordinary ways — for His glory, not ours.

This put me in mind of 2 Corinthians 4, where Paul explains this amazing reality of the treasure of the power of God through Yeshua Messiah in us. Notice these verses:

“But **we have this treasure in clay jars**, so that it will be evident that such overwhelming power comes from God and not from us. We have all kinds of troubles, but we are not crushed; we are perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, yet not abandoned; knocked down, yet not destroyed. We always carry in our bodies the dying of Yeshua, so that the life of Yeshua may be manifested in our bodies too. For we who are alive are always being handed over to death for Yeshua's sake, so that Yeshua's life also might be manifested in our mortal bodies.”
(2 Corinthians 4:7–11 CJB)

When Paul writes to the believers in Corinth that “we have this treasure in clay jars”, he offers a vivid image for the paradox of life as a disciple of Yeshua: immense divine power dwelling in our fragile human bodies. Over the next verses, he unpacks how suffering, endurance, and renewal reveal God’s glory as clearly as a clay jar, cracked and imperfect, showcases the light within. In this newsletter we will journey through Paul’s metaphors — treasure, jars of clay, dying and living — and explore how this passage both grounds us in honest struggle and lifts our gaze toward our eternal hope that outlasts every trial.

Paul starts with a simple yet startling contrast: “we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it will be evident that such overwhelming power comes from God and not from us.” Imagine an ordinary clay pot — thin, brittle, easily chipped or even broken — housing a priceless gem or dazzling light. The fragility of the jar intensifies our wonder: if the pot were indestructible, we might admire its craftsmanship; but its vulnerability draws our eyes to the treasure inside. Paul uses this metaphor not to demean us, but to highlight that the surpassing worth of the gospel — and the power of God at work in us — stands apart from human strength or eloquence. You don’t have to be a superstar to glorify God. In fact, it’s best if you’re not.

By describing himself and his co-laborers as clay jars, Paul dispels any notion that ministry success depends on rhetorical prowess or physical might. Instead, he invites us to see our weaknesses — our fears, frailties, and scars — as the very vessels God chooses to magnify His grace. When we stumble or feel inadequate, the gospel's glow becomes all the more unmistakable because it is not overshadowed by our own achievements.

With the image of treasure and earthen vessels in place, Paul moves to the backdrop of our witness: relentless hardship.

“We have all kinds of troubles, but we are not crushed; we are perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, yet not abandoned; knocked down, yet not destroyed.” (2 Corinthians 4:8–9)

He names four pairs of opposites, each intensifying the contrast between external pressure and internal resilience.

- **“We have all kinds of troubles, but we are not crushed.”** The Greek for “crushed” evokes a pulverized grape beneath a winepress — yet though squeezed to the last drop, Paul refuses to be defeated.
- **“Perplexed, yet not in despair.”** Though questions swirl and hope seems dim, he does not surrender to hopelessness.
- **“Persecuted, yet not abandoned.”** Though enemies close in, God's presence remains a constant refuge.
- **“Knocked down, yet not destroyed.”** A fall cannot finish him; he rises again to continue the race. Even death is defeated in Yeshua Messiah!

Paul's testimony here shows that suffering is not the exception but the norm for those who are true disciples of Yeshua. Yet what sets their endurance apart is not stoicism, but the sustaining power of God. Our weariness, doubts, and even physical afflictions become stages on which His faithful presence shines bright.

WHY YOU'RE NOT PERFECT



“We always carry in our bodies the dying of Yeshua, so that the life of Yeshua may be manifested in our bodies too. For we who are alive are always being handed over to death for Yeshua's sake, so that Yeshua's life also might be manifested in our mortal bodies.” (2 Cor 4:10–11)

Here Paul turns to a deeper mystery: *“We always carry in our bodies the dying of Yeshua, so that the life of Yeshua may be manifested in our bodies too.”* First, this points to the sacrificial nature of discipleship. Every act of self-denial, every moment of patient endurance, and every choice to bear injustice without retaliation reflects Yeshua's own suffering. Second, it connects us to Messiah's ongoing work. Just as the cross was not the end but the passage to resurrection, our sufferings become the soil from which new life emerges. Every healed wound and renewed resolve to love signals Messiah alive within us.

This paradox — death and life entwined — becomes the hallmark of authentic witness. The world sees our wounds; YHWH uses them to display His healing power.

Paul explains why he can persist: *“This is why we do not lose courage”* (4:16). He identifies two contrasting realities: an “outer self” heading for decay, and an “inner self” renewed daily. Our bodies may age, our strength fade, and our burdens pile up — but beneath the surface, spiritual vitality grows in defiance of time's decay.

Paul urges his readers to fix their gaze not on the transient but on the eternal. *“For our light and transient troubles are achieving for us an everlasting glory whose weight is beyond description”* (4:17). He calls these troubles “light” not to belittle their intensity, but to contrast them with the “weight” of glory to come. The Greek for “transient” suggests a fleeting breath compared to the endless ages of fellowship with Messiah in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21).

In verse 18 he sums it up: “We concentrate not on what is seen but on what is not seen, since things seen are temporary, but things not seen are eternal.” The discipline of hope calls us to look beyond our bruised bodies, unresolved conflicts, and griefs — toward the unseen Kingdom of God’s purposes, promises, and presence that no decay can touch.

Paul’s words speak not just to first-century Corinthians, but to every follower of Yeshua today who wrestles with weakness, injustice, and the temptation to despair.

Embrace Weakness as a Platform for His Grace

Instead of hiding our struggles, we can share them, inviting the Body to pray and witness God’s transforming power. Our cracks become windows for His light.

Cultivate Endurance with Other Disciples

Just as clay jars were stored together, we thrive when we walk with others. Renewal is kindled as we rejoice, bear one another’s burdens, and remind each other of unseen realities.

Practice Daily Renewal

Like Paul’s “inner self” being renewed daily, we need regular spiritual disciplines — prayer, Scripture, worship — that recalibrate our vision from the fleeting to the eternal.

Live as Ambassadors of Resurrection

In our responses to injustice, illness, or even the weariness of aging, others should see not defeat, but the indomitable life of Yeshua.

In 2 Corinthians 4, Paul shifts our focus from human strength to the treasure of Divine power, from fleeting troubles to eternal glory. He invites us to stand among clay jars — cracked, dented, and scarred — without shame, because these imperfections allow the brilliance of Messiah to shine through. When we embrace our vulnerabilities, share our sufferings, and fix our eyes on the unseen, we live out the paradox of carrying Yeshua’s death in our bodies so that His life may also be manifest in us.

I pray this reflection emboldens you to see your weaknesses as the stage for Messiah’s radiant grace and power to be known, to renew your inner self daily, and to gaze unwaveringly at the glory that awaits. In so doing, each of us becomes a living vessel for the Kingdom — fragile in form, yet filled with a treasure that forever outlasts the jar that holds it.

Lately we have been seeing that we have abundant treasures in the Kingdom. The *Tsiyon Dudes Rising* have more to bring on that topic on our live stream tonight. Join us tonight at 8 Central, at Tsiyon.Net or other video platforms. Other young people might especially enjoy the Tsiyon Dudes, so invite them along.

In His Name, Eliyahu

Join our live stream tonight! - 8 PM Central - Tsiyon.Net



Audio:



Video:



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