

## **There Are NO Puffer Fish in YHVH's Kingdom**

Over the period of the past year or two I've watched as people that I've known and respected have just become people that I just don't know anymore. Granted, I haven't known these people very well as I have met them through internet connections and such; but I have read their work and talked to them in voice forums and some even on the phone and their words and work has told me that Yahweh is directing them to some degree.

I think that it's important to remember that trees don't just spring into large fruit bearing trees overnight nor does fruit just appear matured upon a tree in a day or two. Trees can take years to grow to mature status and fruit starts out as a tiny flower that accepts the pollen from a tree of like kind and only after botanical sexual union between the two can the process of making the fruit start. If a tree does spring up as a grown tree overnight then it means that it has been placed there mature. While this sometimes works it takes the right conditions and is best done during the winter when the tree is dormant. Mankind has become pretty good at doing this, however it doesn't always work for a variety of different reasons. The thing is that when this is done, it is not natural and has the possibility of failure; much more than when a small sapling or a seed result in the tree.

The internet is a wonderful medium. I have used it for a number of years and through it quite a few people have come to faith in Yeshua. I became a minister of the Gospel of Yeshua when computers were only available to the rich. Yes, I used to have to read the paper Bible, use a book concordance and hand write or type things that I wanted to share with other people. If I wanted to share it with many people, I would have to go down to the corner market and pray that their Xerox machine had fresh toner and lots of paper and I would have to bring a pocketful of change to pay for the copies. And yes, in even earlier days I utilized carbon paper.

The thing is that back then it wasn't as easy to get information out to people. A lot of work had to be done to share anything. An article couldn't be written and disseminated in one day, it took a few days. During that time, it gave people a period where Yahweh could talk to us about what we wrote; whether He wanted us to add something or subtract something and whether what we wrote was too harsh or not strong enough. In essence, Yeshua was our "send button." However nowadays things are much different; we can publish instantly and one has to wonder if that is such a good idea. I'll be honest with you and tell you that this very thing has

turned around and bitten me in the hindquarters before. I've had to apologize to a few people about things that I sent out in haste. Hopefully that lesson has been learned.

Now I know that many of you will agree with me that apologizing is not fun. For some, it is unpleasant because they got caught doing something wrong and the only time they will apologize is when they are caught. For others, and hopefully I fall into this category; we apologize first because we have offended Yeshua, second, because we have offended a person and third because we know that we could have done better and handled things in a godlier manner. So, in essence the wrong was offending Yahweh, our neighbor and ourselves; these three persons being mentioned in the Golden Rule.

Receiving a rebuke is often thought of as being harsh; but it is actually a blessing. We know that we should be happy when Yahweh rebukes us because:

*If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Hebrews 12:7-11*

There is more that goes with all of this that we must explore. We have to realize that prophets, teachers, pastors and other offices that Yahweh bestows upon a person just don't come automatically. By that I mean that there is no McDonalds approach to ministry. In the Israeli priesthood the disciple would spend years in a servant position before they could be inducted into the priesthood. Even though there were separate lines, like the Kohanim and the Levites, each had to serve and learn before they could minister unto Yahweh. The Rabbinical (teaching) position was no different. Many years of schooling, apprenticeship and serving were required before one could be called a rabbi. The same thing applied to the prophets and the scribes. We know from Biblical times that a man was not allowed to start any sort of ministerial service until after they reached the age of 30. Why that age do you suppose? Well, simply put, men do not fully mature (I mean if they're going to mature at all) until around the age of thirty. Science has even given credence to this, stating that a man's brain does not fully mature until his late twenties or around 30. Search for it yourself; these things are easy to find.

Some would say that with the coming of Yeshua that whole thing changed. After all there is no more established priesthood and scribes are a thing of the past because all canon is written. They would say that the Ruach Ha Kodesh could make a person credible right after salvation. Well, let's look at Yeshua's time and see what happened then because it should apply to what should be happening now. Now, let's look at Yeshua himself. Most agree that his ministry started at the age of 30 and that he was crucified at the age of 33. Our very own Lord abided by the set norm. It is agreed amongst most scholars that all of Yeshua's disciples, except for maybe John the Younger were at least 30 years old, and even if they were in their late twenties when they started with Yeshua, they were the approved age when Yeshua commissioned them just before he ascended into heaven. So most agree that thirty and above is the accepted age for ministry to begin.

But before we move on, let's examine one more aspect of this whole thing. It is around the age thirty that a man starts to mellow as well as mature. Before that age men are cocky, immature and they're all trying to vie for top-dog status amongst themselves and amongst the women that they find appealing. Do you know why the military has a cutoff age for induction? Well, it does have something to do with physical restrictions that occur as a man starts to age, but there are other factors. Another important reason is that young men haven't developed the ability to think correctly and reason effectively. A sergeant can tell a young man to run through a mine field and chances are that he'll do it, not because of valor, but because he wants to prove to his buddies that he's cool and brave. Ask a thirty-year-old man to do the same thing and he's going to tell the sergeant a hundred different reasons why it is a bad idea. It is because the older man has lived longer and seen things happen that causes him to make deductions that make common sense. He'll deduce that finding a way around the field, or crawling ever so slowly through it while marking the mines will be better for everyone, including himself.

And finally, an older man and/or woman tends to know who he is in his relationship with Yahweh. They've had more life's experience; they know better how to handle people and situations, and because they're a bit more mellowed they know how to listen to Yahweh's voice better. They've made life's tough decisions; they've gotten married, had two or more children and they're more stable in their employment. Younger people are still trying to find themselves and make the decisions that the older people have already made and the decisions that they are trying to make can often cloud their thinking. I was saved by grace when I was twenty years old and I'll be the first to admit that although I held some less important ministry duties; I was always a helper or an assistant of some sort. I thank Yahweh that this was the case because I know that when I was in my twenties I was praying and trying to find what Yahweh had for me

and my life. Had I tried to strike out on my own I would have messed up my own life and the lives of others. And like I just said, I would have been setting out ON MY OWN, and not necessarily in Yahweh's scheme of things.

When we look at the disciples of Yeshua, one of the things that we notice is that they were not fully commissioned to go out until after Yeshua had ascended to heaven. Sure, there were short periods of time when he would send them out to offer the Gospel, but he sent them out two by two and they always came back to their master. They were disciples until Yeshua gave him the commission to go into all the world to spread the Good News. The important thing about this is that they were disciples for three years. We have to realize that Yahweh is a God of Order and that He has prescribed methods of doing things where ministry is concerned. All of the prophets, scribes, priests, Levites and Disciples all sat under authority and were taught by that authority, and it was for at least the minimum of three years. Has Yahweh changed? I think not. Scripture says that Yeshua Ha Mashiach is the same yesterday, today and forever. Scripture says that God changes not, but man changes. Maybe part of the mess that the church is in today is because so many refuse to sit under authority and they rush to the Church of McDonald's takeout window. Yahweh never meant for it to be this way. Many who have been disciplined the correct way know this to be true; we've witnessed it firsthand and have seen the harm that has been done by fast-food ministry. I'm sure that many of you who are reading this will agree too.

Have you ever seen a puffer fish? You can find them in just about every ocean. They are strange looking to begin with but all in all they are just another fish. As a defense mechanism they are able to puff themselves up like a large spiny balloon. They try to make themselves look bigger than they really are in order to fend off predators and they later deflate when the danger has passed. The key words here are puffed up and deception. These two things are talked about in scripture to great extent, and we are warned about them time and time again in the Bible's pages.

The Bible talks about people who are puffed up; who are too big for their own boots, so to speak:

*Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. 1 Corinthians 4:18-20*

And:

*Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.  
Colossians 2:18-19*

Now what I'm about to write might offend some, and if it does then perhaps those offended need to go into prayer about what their heart is like. Those who know that their hearts are pure and their intentions are in obedience to Yahweh will not be offended. It almost appears that when a person gets a college degree that a certain spirit of pride could attach itself to that person. The higher the degree, the stronger the attachment. Let me give you a few examples.

Just yesterday I was reading a post in Facebook. I go there a lot because you can get the real feeling for what people are thinking because there seems to be a certain anonymity to the site; even though you give people most of your information anyway. So, someone had a link on their thread that led to a newspaper article where some Catholic theologian speculates that if ET did come to earth, they should be given every courtesy, even offering them Yeshua's Communion at a service. Well, knowing that these things are fallen angels I know that they can take Communion all they want and all they will be doing is taking condemnation unto themselves; just like Scripture says regarding taking the emblems "unworthily." I decided to scroll down to see what comments might be at the bottom because everyone has to have a voice these days even if they don't have any authoritative reason to have a voice. Sure enough, the second person who posted started off his post by stating that he has a "master's degree in divinity" and that he sees nothing in scripture that would negate there being intelligent life in the universe. I guess he hasn't read his Bible seriously because if one does a study, the Bible has plenty to say to contradict what this man said. Simply put, you can have all of those letters behind your name, but still be an ignorant fool. To me, and to anyone else that knows the truth about the whole UFO and alien abduction phenomenon, what this guy was really saying is, "*Hi, I'm highly educated yet I know nothing about what I am talking about.*"

Recently I ran into another person who is well educated and has a master's degree in one of the sciences. This person is smart as a whip and I was really marveled by their intelligence in several different areas. They are a nice person and there is no doubt that they love Yeshua and their salvation is irrefutable. This person had also been through a lot in their lifetime; more than you or I could probably handle without going crazy; yet they are quite sane. During a long time of solitude, they read the Bible and did Bible studies that dealt mainly with the area of their life that they were going through. They picked up a lot of knowledge for sure; but the drawback was

that they thought that the knowledge that they attained from their study was was applicable in not just their situation, but in all situations and they sort of took on the air that if you didn't believe the way that they did, you were not as esteemed in the area of Biblical learning as they were; even to the point of how a person should pray; if you didn't agree with their way of doing it, you were stupid; and if you tried to voice your opinion or defend your stance they belittled you and they were masterful at taking anything that I said and jumbling it around to make them look like a victim when all I was trying to do was express my point of view.

Both of these people were puffed up; they are puffer fish. They both used their educational status as a defense mechanism and as a tool to establish right off the bat that if you differed in opinion with them you cannot be right; after all, you're not as educated as they are. In many ways they are quite intelligent; but in that intelligence they forgot the simplest of Yeshua's commandments; that being that the greatest amongst you must be servant to the least. The pride that comes with their titles caused both of them to state facts with authority, but where did that authority come from? Did they make Godly statements or did they make statements from the flesh. The answer is quite evident.

We are told that Yeshua went through all of the temptations that we have or will go through. We can find a lot of comfort in that. Yeshua never went to a seminary or rabbinical school nor did he study under the priesthood. I'm sure that he had the same education that every young Jewish boy had at that time; lessons in a Jewish school like one can find in any big city around the world and what He was able to glean from the elders of the synagogue. It is possible that Yeshua attended a minimum of schooling because he followed in the footsteps of his stepfather Yosef and became a carpenter. We see an interesting story unfold when Yeshua went back to Nazareth to see his family, and how He was spurned because He didn't have letters behind his name either:

*And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. Mark 6:1-4*

What the elders were saying to Yeshua is something like this: “Wow, the stuff that you are telling us is wonderful and amazing, but we know you. We know that you are just a carpenter, that your mother is Miriam and that she’s just a plain old woman here in our section of town. Oh, and your brothers Ya’akov, Yosef, Yehuda and Shimon are all with us and boy are they a handful. So, given your family and the fact that you never had a formal education, where do you get off telling us what is right and what is wrong? Who gave you any authority; we don’t recognize you!” Sound familiar?

What they didn’t take into account; and possibly they didn’t know; was that Yeshua was anointed with the Ruach Ha Kodesh; that along with the fact that He is God Incarnate gave him all of the authority that he needed. That very same Ruach Ha Kodesh (Holy Spirit) is given to every believer who humbly comes to faith in Yeshua through being born again in the Ruach Ha Kodesh. From the greatest to the least, if your heart is right with Yahweh and your living a life for Him then you are endowed with the same Ruach that Yeshua had. Yeshua said that when the Ruach Ha Kodesh came (speak of at Pentecost the first time) that He would teach Yeshua’s believers ALL THINGS; and He has been doing that from the first Pentecost and right up to this day.

What do we know from scripture about the character of the person that Yahweh can use for His purposes? What does scripture say about the true servant of Yahweh?

1. Broken and contrite.
2. Sold out to Yahweh and Yahweh alone.
3. Obedient
4. Humility
5. Attitude of a servant
6. Circumspect
7. Loving Yahweh and others more than himself or herself

These are the things that Yahweh is looking for in those who He can use for His purposes. He cannot and will not use puffer fish; those who are puffed up in their own spiritual pride and status and He certainly will not use someone who touts their credentials at the beginning of an oratory or a written word. These things the Gentiles seek after, so to speak.

I have good news for those of you who come up against puffer fish. Their works will not stand when all of our works are judged. These things are referred to by Yeshua as wood, hay and

stubble; and they all will burn up in an unquenchable fire. Sometimes we come upon these wonderful educated types and it is a natural inclination to feel stupid, unworthy or just plain foolish. Well are you ready for this? Yahweh can use the foolish way easier than he can use the proud and wise, and here is the proof:

*Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 1 Peter 5:5*

And:

*But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 1:23-27*

You see, we have to get out of the habit of caring what the world things, or what those who consider themselves more intelligent than we are; what they care about. In the scripture above, Yahweh is not calling us foolish; but he is saying that the world might think that we're foolish; but to Him we are invaluable. To Yahweh, a yielded heart toward Him is worth more than all of the wisdom of this world.

If you happen to be one of those puffer fish I pray that you would come to Yahweh in humility and ask His forgiveness. There is no sin that is stronger than His love; he'll welcome you back with open arms. If you've found offense by what has been written here then you have bigger fish to fry. On the last day there will be only two types of people; those who bend their knee willingly, and those who will have to bow their knee begrudgingly, but will bend their knee out of reverence to the Lamb of Yahweh. I hope and pray that everyone reading this will be in the first category. Shalom in Yeshua!