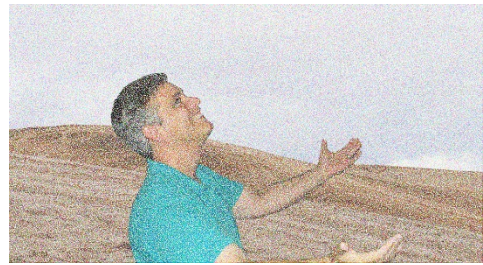




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In His Dust

Staying Close

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As I continue to learn more about Yeshua (Jesus) by understanding the culture in which He lived, I fall more and more in love with Him! The autumn tasks seem to multiply, but I want to keep lots of room for this pursuit!

We attended our first Feast of Tabernacles celebration this past weekend in Xenia, Ohio. I have never seen banners so enrapturing that I could not take a picture; the moment and the music of the procession was too holy. The fervency of the men dancing with might and fervor before the Lord is a sight I will never forget. Their strength and joy is imbedded in my mind and encourages my heart toward a full pursuit of Messiah. Everyone from toddler to elder participated. A six-year-old boy taught us about the *lulav* (the cluster of palm, willow and myrtle branches with an etrog fruit) that is waved in celebration. And then there was Irmgard who prepared home-made garden soups and German pastries from scratch – food of excellence that nourished and comforted our bodies to continue worshipping. It was a high, holy, and lavish celebration that was a glory to Him and a testimony to the unity of His people, each member contributing fully to a grand commemoration!

During the day, Lois Tverberg taught us. She has been writing and teaching about the Jewish background of Christianity for the past fifteen years. I appreciate how she emphasized the importance of not only using Hebrew words and celebrating Jewish holidays, but also using non-Hebrew words and celebrations to build a bridge of understanding with those who are not accustomed to the Hebrew. After all God used the pagan culture of Abraham's time to reach him because it was all Abraham knew. God would slowly reach His people with His loving ways by using aspects of their culture they could relate to. This gave me much food for thought. God takes everything and makes it new to speak of His love!

Today, I would like to give you an excerpt from Lois' book, *Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus*, that moved me to tears. Then, I will share a prayer I wrote that was born from this excerpt. Lois writes:

“The way Jesus taught his first disciples was not unique but part of a wider tradition in Judaism that began a few centuries before his time. Jesus didn't hand his disciples a textbook or give them a course syllabus. He asked each one of them to follow him – literally, to *walk after* him. He invited them to trek the byways at his side, living life beside him to learn from him as they journeyed. His disciples would engage in life's activities along with him, observing his responses and imitating how he lived by God's Word.

Out of this unusual teaching method arose a well-known saying: you should learn from a rabbi by *covering yourself in his dust*. You should follow so closely behind him as he traveled from town to town teaching that billows of sandy granules would cling to your clothes. As you walked after your rabbi, your heart would change.” (from the Mishnah, Avot 1:4 ascribed to Yose ben Yoezer who lived in the second century BC.)

Let's pray:

Master Yeshua, living Lord, I want to walk by Your side and learn from You as we trek the byways together. I want to see You, Your responses to life and people around me – how You live and how You love them. I want to be covered in Your dust. I want Your dust in my face and on my clothes. You caused me to be born anew by the Ruach HaKodesh, the Holy Spirit, and changed my heart to see clearly and love You; continue to mold my heart so that my words and actions imitate Yours. I listen to You with disciples' ears, eager to follow. I want my lifestyle to reflect You. Tell me, Savior, as I look at my to-do list... Where are You walking? What path are You taking? Teach me to pray as You would. Release me into Your joy. Hide me in You as we journey together, my Wonderful Counselor, Companion, Mighty God, Prince of Peace. Amen.