



The Smiling Maven

Grace for Grace (John 1:16)
חסד על חסד (יוחנן א'טו)



This Man, Y'shua

Some people understand; some people do not understand. Life is not a bowl of cherries. It also is not a bowl of pits. It is somewhere in between. People are not always perfect. People are not always horrible. Things rarely line up exactly as they should; things happen that we do not like, do not expect, and would not wish upon someone else. We struggle with life, and we struggle with what it means to be human.

Two thousand years ago a human being, a man, an unusual man walked this earth; his name was Y'shua (Jesus). Y'shua, a Jew, a carpenter, walked this earth like no other man or woman. Y'shua is an amazing man.¹ The first time that I seriously read about him was while I was a college student in the early eighties. I picked up a book at the public library titled something like "Jesus, a look at the man."

Whether the author was skeptical or believing about Y'shua being the Messiah, I do not know. I do remember that the focus was a closer or more deliberate view of Y'shua as a human being, as a man. The book highlighted his magnetic personality, his ministry, his life etc. Fishermen, political zealots, tax collectors and many others left their professions to follow him. He ministered to sick, struggling, and hurting people in all walks of life. When dealing with opposition (usually from the religious), his demeanor and responses were surprising and cut to the core of the issues involved. Even when facing trial and crucifixion, the strength of Y'shua's personality continued to amaze both his followers and his opponents.

Historically, there is no serious doubt about the existence of Y'shua. He lived, he walked this earth, and he touched many

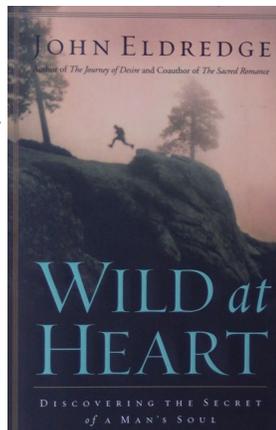
lives. No other human being has affected so many lives over so great a period of time as this simple carpenter from Nazareth. The impact of Y'shua on both Jewish and Gentile lives since his simple walk on earth is remarkable. So what about this man? Maybe he is worth reading about. Maybe he is worth seriously investigating. Our world seems to have an increasing amount of depression, discontent and mental illnesses. We are all at least a little "off the mark." If we are honest with ourselves, and with others, we can admit that we are all a bit crazy (maybe some more than others). The only one who has ever walked this earth that was completely and fully sane was this incredible man named Y'shua. We could all learn something from him.



Book Review: Wild at Heart

In the summer of 2002 I was visiting a church in Madison, Wisconsin. During a "coffee hour" prior to the main service I found myself looking at some books that were for sale. I was attracted to one called Wild at Heart by John Eldredge; I had never heard of Mr. Eldredge, but was surprisingly drawn to this book. The sub-title is "Discovering the Secret of a Man's Soul".

"Men are from Mars, women are from Venus." Maybe, not really, but that statement expresses something about the unique wiring of the different sexes. John Eldredge, in his 2001 book Wild at Heart, hits the nail on the head explaining the way men are wired, and what we are wired for. Though I cannot imagine a man that would not appreciate or at least glean some things from this book, every woman that I know that has read this book has also appreciated the way Eldredge explains the unique motivational design of men.



Eldredge, rather simply (and appropriately), suggests that men naturally long to fulfill in the following three areas: 1) an adventure to live 2) a battle to fight, and 3) a beauty to rescue. Eldredge is not talking about a super macho image, a brawler, or a womanizer, but rather, healthy natural aspects of a man that desire adventure, the outdoors, athletics, travel, as well as mental challenges – academic, occupational and business ventures etc. A man is wired to be able to fight (if needed) to protect his family and/or country. A boy naturally plays "soldier" or "army" because someday his nation may call on him to defend its freedom. The men on the Titanic allowed the woman and children to go on the lifeboats first, because a man is designed to protect, to rescue the woman and her children. A man's masculinity is actually compromised when any of these three are unnecessarily eliminated or squelched in his life.

A second aspect to a man's soul is the reality that the core of his masculinity is usually wounded in life, and most often that wound comes from a father or father figure. Part of a man discovering himself as a man requires the healing of that wound, a healing that requires a healing by the healer, Messiah Y'shua. God designed men as men: seeing and receiving His

Ministry Update—Christmas and Beyond

I must admit that the week and a half before Christmas was a small disaster. I am not exactly a Christmas animal. There are always so many happenings at this time of year. In addition to Chanukah and Christmas, there was my in-laws' 50th wedding anniversary, as well as my birthday with a party from the Faith Homes. On top of all this, I was trying to refurbish (for Christmas) a computer for my in-laws, which was a constant problem. After numerous hours of technical struggle, it was working and continued to work until I attempted to finalize some things on Monday at my in-laws, and the machine basically went kaput.

PRAISE THE LORD anyway. I am smiling about the whole ordeal now, but while in Zion, I was quite stressed out, and it was difficult to smile. Somehow, we were able to leave Zion and make our way to my in-laws. A change of "scenery" and the beginning of two weeks' vacation began paying dividends immediately. Even with the computer failing at the in-laws, my disposition had begun to relax. I found myself looking at Y'shua a bit more, and the frustrating circumstances less. The time with family, and an excellent Christmas Eve service, helped to refresh my soul. It shouldn't come as a surprise - God is gracious, and for some strange reason he continues to be gracious to me.

Wild at Heart (continued from page 1)

acceptance and approval as men are all part of the healing.

This book is not always easy for me to read or re-read. A man's wound can be deep within. Eldredge explains that in order for that wound to be healed, we need to allow the Lamb of God as well as the Lion of Judah into the place of that wound. That requires some brokenness on our part, something the world and our false self fights. Yet, it is exactly what we need. This book touches something deep, and touches the very core of what it means to be a man.



Notes: 1. Y'shua is both the Son of Man and the Son of God.

As I reflect upon these things, and how stressed, ungracious, upset, down and frustrated that I can become at times, I ponder how ridiculous, absurd, and plain unreasonable it is for me to be a servant and a spokesperson for the King of Kings. *Unless*, and that's an interesting word, the King of Kings is really that gracious, and truly full of grace. *Unless*, he is lovingly and persistently looking to convince me, and others of this paramount truth. I can look back upon this messed up time, and I can see that I am continuing to learn that God is truly gracious, the gospel is true, His kingdom is real, and the earthly things just aren't that big of a deal. Why I am so dense? I just do not know, but I am encouraged that something in my heart is blown away by the persistence of God's continued grace to me. All I can say is it is amazing.

Along with my own bumbling journey of experiencing grace, I find faith in my heart that it is this incredible grace that is percolating and soon to be revealed, demonstrated, and exploded in and among the people and the land of Israel.

"And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honor before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it." (Jer. 33:9)

"For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Ro. 11:31-32)

This is the ministry that I believe God has placed, impressed, banged, and is continuing to lovingly impress on my heart. Grace, grace, grace. It is the gospel. It is my testimony, and it is what is coming to

Some of you might be interested in receiving a "Ministry Update" e-mail on a monthly basis. This will share current happenings and related prayer requests. We will only send this out if someone requests it. If you are interested please send us an e-mail at smilingmaven@yahoo.com.

Israel, and will continue to bless all of the world.

This year I am looking to pull back from Faith Home leadership and focus more on sharing God's grace through Smiling Maven Ministries. Numerous speaking engagements are developing for 2008. I am also looking to take my second trip to Israel and continue to develop my understanding of Hebrew. There is a strong desire to be able to speak and communicate God's incredible grace in Hebrew as well as in English.

During Christmas break Ruthe and I drove down to Florida for 10 days of sunshine. In Miami Beach, Ruthe convinced her dad to have this caricature drawn by a Russian Jewish artist, Alex Tokarenko.



The Smiling Maven is a bi-monthly Jewish flavored newsletter sharing God's incredible grace. There is coming a spiritual atomic bomb of that incredible grace. It is an imminent spiritual explosion soon to happen in Israel that will have a wonderfully awesome effect in Israel and all the world.

Life is often hard. Suffering is a real part of life. Sometimes suffering enables us to see more clearly the reality that God loves us. He loves us unconditionally; it is not based on how we are doing. We may begin to understand the wonder of God's salvation through Messiah Y'shua. Grace might actually be breaking through into our lives. It is the experience of grace that can generate the most genuine smiles. "Maven" is a Yiddish word that means "a person with special knowledge or experience." Evidence of God's grace should be characterized by an ability to smile. *The Smiling Maven* newsletter is an encouragement for all of us to be smiling mavens, smiling people with special knowledge of God's amazing grace.

EditorArthur Weiner
Someone needing to Smile More

Copy Editor.....Peter Toeg
Making sure that our English keeps people smiling.

Production Assistant.....Ruthe Weiner
Often producing more smiles than her dad.

Quality Control.....Caleb Weiner
Smiling, especially while playing on the computer.

You can also visit our website at smilingmaven.com. Contact us at smilingmaven@yahoo.com, The Smiling Maven 2816 Eshcol Avenue, Zion IL 60099, or call us at 847-731-6838. The Smiling Maven Newsletter is a division of Smiling Maven Ministries NFP, a not for profit corporation of the State of Illinois.