

Taking the Sensational Over the Simple

Just like porn and oil; religion, self-help and the paranormal has become a multi-million dollar industry; people always thinking they are missing something, when in reality they have all they need in front of them, they just haven't taken what they have and dug deep enough in an attempt to exhaust that resource before moving on.

What am I talking about? I'm talking about the Scriptures. It's as if people look at the Scriptures like last year's roller coaster and say with bored apathy. "Yeah, been there, done that, bought the t-shirt." When in fact they haven't even scratched the surface.

In bookstores and online I see Talmud this and Kabbalah that, Apocrypha this and Extra Biblical that with throngs of people buying, subscribing and downloading and the Torah seems to collect dust like a Gideon Bible in a Hotel room bedside drawer. I'm not saying there is anything wrong with the Apocrypha, Extra Biblical Literature, or Talmud; they have their time and place, but it is like an infant that hasn't even cut teeth trying to gnaw on a steak! One would rather study Kabbalah than the weekly Torah Portion or simply read a daily portion in the Bible! This is all backwards; backwards even from Apostle Paul's day:

1Cor. 3:2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able [to bear it], neither yet now are ye able.

Hebrews 5:12-14 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which [be] the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk [is] unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, [even] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

They should have known enough, but didn't step up to the plate. Today, many people THINK they know so much and want to fly a plane without going to flight school! It's the result of the conditioning of this selfish, want-it-all-now, instant, microwavable society.

Look, there have been many of Rabbi who spent their whole life on Genesis 1:1 because the Word is so full, rich and deep that there are layers within layers.

We Jews call the study of the Word of God by the Hebrew word Pardes, or in English, Paradise. We get ecstasy and joy out of the Word and the Word alone. Here is why, and you will see the analogy to the layers that I just mentioned.

PaRDeS: This is an acronym for how we Jews interpret Scripture: Pardes, meaning “Paradise” in Hebrew.

P- Pashat= The simple, literal, plain meaning.

R- Remez= The homiletical meaning. Something hinted at.

D- Drash= The allegorical meaning and or the teaching and application of a given passage.

S- Sod= The deep, hidden, secret, spiritual meaning of a given text.

The main Rule is the other interpretations NEVER take away from the Pashat level of interpretation.

And there are multiple layers within each one of the main layers shown here. Sadly many in their studies haven’t even grazed the Pashat level and they want to take a crack at the Sod level, or worse yet, delve into Talmud or Kabbalah!? It’s like trying to read and decipher computer code and only knowing how to send an e-mail! It’s like trying to read the Lord of the Rings Trilogy staring with The Two Towers! It simply won’t make sense.

Today, more than ever we need to get back to the basics of simple truth.