



FAITH
FREE
ADVENTURE
IN
TRUSTING
HIM

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“FAITH,
a Free Adventure In Trusting Him”

is

How I became a changed instrument in the
hand of God.

Daniel Huyser

FAITH

a Free Adventure in Trusting Him!

Introduction

My mother, who was a missionary and mentor, once said that God always first works on the one whom He sends. I never understood it until the Lord sent me, and I realized that being called starts with a journey called Faith. In this adventure, the Lord focuses on teaching us to place our trust in Him and His ability without considering our own inability within the circumstances we find ourselves.

When the Lord told me to go to Israel, I initially thought to myself that I will be sharing His love and in so doing transform the heart of many. However God had a different perspective, His plan was to transform me! As I once read, to be an instrument of change you must be a changed instrument.

The journey to Israel and my time on mount Samuel was the training ground God chose to mold me and to change me for His purpose. John Eldridge wrote in his book "Wild at heart" that at some stage God takes over the father's responsibility to teach His child, and this journey was the place the Lord ordained to teach me.

This small book called "FAITH, a Free Adventure In Trusting Him" is my story, and how I became a changed instrument in the hand of God.

The Beginning.

Every journey has a starting point, for me the starting point was 'n broken life, a divorce and no apparent future. The only plan I had was to get away and to start over, but God was not on my agenda. In hindsight, it was clear that I was on His agenda.

I did not know where to start and turned to old friends to help me in my quest. The answer they gave me was unexpected, turn to God, they said. Although I acknowledged what they said, I did not understand as my concern was more with the current realities of my life.

They, however, assisted me in finding a job in Pretoria, but I had no accommodation. I turned to my mother, who in accordance with God's predestined plan, (as for all of US!) stayed on a mission base. The doors were open for me to stay there and during my stay, there was "conveniently" a mission conference, which I was reluctant to join. The invitation, however, was persuasive enough to make me stand at the door and watch. One of the attendee's came to me saying that God instructed him to pull me out of this hole and explained he wanted to manifest it by pulling me physically, with a tongue in the cheek, I agreed to this seemingly stupidity. As I was still smoking at that stage, I put my cigarette on the retaining wall of the flower bed and instructed him to pull me. He just made a small pulling gesture on my arms, pulling me one step closer to him. As I suspected nothing happened and I took my cigarette and continued smoking, standing at the door looking and listening.

At that stage I did not know the Bible text in 1 Corinthians 1:27 "But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are of the mighty". The "foolish act" of pulling me out of the hole had a deep Spiritual effect, not miraculously but over time as it came into fulfillment.

The first effect of the mentioned "foolish act" was strange. I experienced that my thoughts started wondering towards thoughts of using a blanket with a bible verse on it, to tell people about the love of God. Even though I did not attend church or read the bible, these thoughts continued. In desperation I asked my mother for a book concerning God, with the intend of trying to find out more about God. I was not willing to read the Bible, because I never understood the Bible.

My mother gave me a book of Derek Prince called foundations for Christian living. While reading the book I came to a part where he explained the

power of the Holy Spirit as God's promise in Christ to empower us, to be a witness of Jesus, enabling us to resist the flesh and the nature thereof. I instantly knew that this was the part I missed in my life for I always knew that I was a sinner but did not know how to withstand the power of sin over my life. This newfound knowledge that I never heard of in church gave me a new perspective about God and His desire to be in relationship with us even to the extent that He promised to empower and enable us through His Son Jesus Christ and the power of His Holy Spirit.

I wanted to know more, just as my friends suggested, I needed more than what they could give, I needed to start with the Lord. My mother gave me a New Living Translation Bible I started to read. As I was reading the Bible, a new world opened up for me, a world revealing God's Love for a lost world. The more I read the Bible the more joy I experienced. Then Dini, who runs the mission base, asked me to surrender my life unto the Lord so that He could complete the work He started in me. I wanted to surrender, but my response was, how? Her answer "A simple prayer of acknowledging your need to be saved in the name of Jesus Christ as the Son of the Living God".

After I prayed, she said that I could ask the Lord for any two things I wanted. I asked for the desire of my heart at that moment, true love and purpose for my life.

Transformation.

The butterfly is often used as an example of a transformed life. For me, it started during a visit to a friend of the mission base who assists in deliverance. Deliverance is not as dramatic as expected but sometimes we live a life believing in a lie that the enemy told us, and being delivered is simply to be set free by the truth. Jesus said in John 8:31-32 ...*"If you obey what I say, then you are really my talmidim (disciples), you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* It is to step into the light and being delivered from the darkness of deception and lies.

Jesus said that He is the light of the world and that He came to give us life and life in abundance, but the enemy is the father of lies and he came only to steal and destroy. Sometimes without even realizing it, the enemy through deception steals our lives as we believe in his lies about ourselves. I believe that day the Lord revealed the truth to me concerning all the lies I believed. Without any restraint, I just started crying, not a cry of sorrow but of pure joy. The next step, after being set free from all the lies I believed, was to be baptized.

Baptism is the process of being transformed as you immerse yourself in the character and authority of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus said in Matthew 28:19 *"Therefore, go and make people from all nations into talmidim (disciple), immersing them into the reality of the Father, the Son and the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit).* It is through baptism that we can be raised with Christ Jesus into the life God intended for us. Paul explained the mentioned in Romans 6:7-11 *"For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise, you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord"*.

This transformation is also explained in Ephesians 2:10 as a precondition to enable us to do the good work God planned for us, even from before the foundation of the world. *"For we are of God's making, created in union with the Messiah Yeshua for a life of good actions already prepared by God for us to do"*. There was nothing I wanted more at that stage than to be baptized, for I knew that through baptism I could rise with Christ Jesus into the new life for the glory of God. The Lord however showed me through a dream that

I first had to repent of the sin I committed that led me to believe in the lies about myself and that He wanted to set me free from it. For this to happen, I had to confess it to someone whom I could trust. In so doing, the lie and the sin will be brought into the light so that it can never again confront me from a place of darkness.

Soon after I confessed it, I was baptized in the swimming pool at Alabanza. What stood out for me is that as I confessed it as in Acts 8:37, all those present became a witness of what I said and as brothers and sisters in Christ they continued to guide me in my walk with the Lord. The Lord then showed me in a vision a scroll resembling a blueprint of a building plan. As He rolled it out, it was still empty. I knew that this represented my new life in Christ, it is empty because every step I take with the Lord will be part of this plan coming into fulfillment, and the past was no longer part of what God had install for me.

Soon after being baptized, I resigned my work to be full time on the mission base, learning about God, a time of growth where the Bible became like a newfound treasure. As I searched through this treasure trove of God's Word, I found God's unconditional love for me and you. I realized that when I surrendered my life into His hands, looking for true love, that God is love. He is the only source of true love and when He created us, He did it in love and reaffirmed it when He RECREATED us in love through His Son Jesus Christ. As it is written in John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed."*

Preparation for a journey.

I just want to remind you of what I asked of the Lord in the beginning, true love and a purpose for life. As mentioned, the Lord revealed His love for me and for all of us, and I realized that He is love and the source of love.

Concerning the second part of what I asked of the Lord, a purpose for my life. I could not find my purpose even though I knew that I wanted to follow and serve the Lord for the rest of my life.

The one thing I realized is that by following the Lord we do not know the destination; we can only follow Him. When the two disciples asked Jesus where He was staying, He invited them to come and see. If we want to follow Jesus, He invites us on the journey He prepared for us, as we must follow Him.

In Paul's explanation of love in 1 Corinthians 13, he is preparing us to understand what it means to follow Christ Jesus. 1 Corinthians 13:13 *But for now, three things last—trust, hope, love; and the greatest of these is love.* I believe that the mentioned speaks of requirements of following the Lord, meaning that the three phases are evident in our life as we follow Jesus. It starts with faith that produces hope and ends in love.

Faith is an acronym for Free Adventure in Trusting Him. Following the Lord is an adventure because we do not know the end of the journey. Our hope is, however, in reaching the goal and the goal is love. The love of God is the motivation that drives us, so in preparing for the journey, the Lord showed me that if the end is love I must learn how to love. One of the lessons the Lord taught me on the mission base is that you cannot share His love in anger.

During a routine task on the mission base, i.e. cleaning the carpets. One of the missionaries wanted to assist me; by advising me on a better method of cleaning the carpets, I immediately took offense and in anger gave the vacuum cleaner to her, insisting that she could continue the cleaning since she knows so much. As I entered my room I thought to myself, maybe I should pray about what had just happened. The Lord immediately told me through His Word that now is not the time to be angry.

That day, I realized that God's Word is a living Word that guides us through life if we are willing to listen to His guidance, I went back, apologized and continued cleaning the carpets, realizing that obedience requires the act of

following Jesus.

Serving on the mission base became a joyful experience, I believe that in doing God's will the Spirit of God starts to rejoice in us, as it is written in Nehemiah 8:10 *Then he said to them, "Go, eat rich food, drink sweet drinks, and send portions to those who can't provide for themselves; for today is consecrated to our Lord. Don't be sad, because the joy of ADONAI is your strength."*

Even though I understood that our purpose is to follow the Lord, I still longed for directions. Then after about a year on the mission base, I woke up with a Word from the Lord Ezekiel 36:1 *"Now you, human being, prophesy to the mountains of Isra'el. Say: 'Mountains of Isra'el, hear the message from ADONAI.*

This was the direction I longed for, knowing that obedience requires action I told my mother and the other people that God called me to go to Israel's mountain. In looking back, I realized that I had childlike faith and nothing else mattered to me except to get to Israel as I followed the Lord.

Following Jesus.

Since after receiving the Word concerning Israel, whenever I would close my eyes in prayer, I would see the Lord walking before me as I follow Him, rejoicing and dancing. The Lord, however, did not walk on a prepared path but as He walked, a path was created. I just knew that the Lord would open a way for me, but I needed to start following.

So, I decided to go to the Israel embassy with the news that the Lord called me to go to Israel. At the embassy they did not open the door for me but after hearing my story they directed me to go to the Jewish counsel in Johannesburg.

The next day I made an appointment to go to the Jewish counsel; I was advised by the other missionaries that I should not tell them that I am a missionary since we are not allowed to evangelize in Israel. However, while driving there, I felt that I must tell them the truth, so on arrival I met with a woman who asked me why I wanted to go to Israel. I believe the Lord gave me the answer for I told her that the Lord told me to go and to serve His people. She became emotional and advised me to join the SAR-EL volunteer program, I was interviewed for security purposes with the same question and same result. I knew the Lord was with me. With the letter I received from them I rejoiced knowing that the Lord is creating the way, even though I could see no clear path.

Since I stayed on the mission-base for a year without any income, I had no financial provision to go to Israel, I only had faith and the vision that Jesus was making a way as I followed Him. One of my friends who knew that the Lord called me to go to Israel said that he will donate R4000 towards the airplane ticket. After the meeting at the Jewish counsel and the letter confirming that I can partake in the SAR-EL program, I went to a flight center to get the airplane ticket to Israel. They, however, informed me that a ticket cost R6000.00. I only had the R 4000.00 rand from my friend and R400.00 my mother gave me, but I had A FAITH MINDSET = Free Adventure in Trusting Him. I asked for a ticket to Egypt, since Egypt is just next to Israel and the ticket only cost R4300.00. I thought that if I could get to Egypt, I will be close enough to get to Israel. Armed with my ticket that was only valid for a month, I returned REJOICING to the mission base. However, they did not share in the same joy as they considered the closed border between Egypt and Israel a problem. I was, however, confident that the Lord who called me would make a way even if there seemed to be no

way.

That Sunday at church, the pastor's wife stood up and said that she feels she needs to say that Egypt represents the body, Sinai dessert the soul and Israel the Spirit. I just knew that the word was from the Lord to me. It confirmed that the Lord would make a way; I also felt that it seemed like a prophetic process of being prepared for the Lord.

The Start of an Adventure

The bible verse that stood out for me was Romans 8:31 *“What, then, are we to say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”*

The mentioned verse formed the basis of my preparation, for apart from trusting that God can do the impossible, I did not know how to prepare for this unfamiliar adventure, with no knowledge of what to expect or how long it would last.

An adventure is defined as an unusual and exciting or daring experience, for me it was each one mentioned. It made me full of overwhelming joy and expectation knowing that I will be on an adventure in trusting God. It was as if all the stories of missionaries and their adventures in trusting God finally came true in my life. I thought to myself, I will no longer only read about it, I am going to experience it for myself.

I felt that all I needed was faith in God, knowing that He called me and as He made a way for so many others who believed and trusted in Him that He will do the same for me. My mother used to say that when God sends you, He sends you first for yourself, meaning that God first purpose to transform you, so that you can walk with Him. Since I could not rely on my own ability as I had nothing to rely on, I knew I were in the perfect position to place my trust in God. I did not even have a time frame, even though the flight ticket I bought was only for a month. I said to myself and my mother encouraged me, “I will follow Jesus”, His plan, not my plan or any other plan.

Organizing the initial stage of this adventure was easy since I had the ticket to Egypt and a letter from the Jewish board to inform the Israeli authorities that I was selected to join the SAR-EL program. The trip expenses were sorted since I had a R400.00 monthly donation my mother pledged to give me as part of her tithe, and about 50 U\$ dollars she had from a previous mission trip. My luggage was simple, a friend gave me his backpack, I already had the necessary clothes, my Bible, an old laptop, mobile CD player and a few CD's my mother gave me.

I did not have any entry or exit plan, I did not know where I would sleep in Egypt or how I would travel to Israel, but I knew that Jesus was preparing a way where there was no way. The few Hebrew words I learned was just to be able to say hallo and thank you.

One of the books I read, called “Wild at Heart” really encourage me to be “wild at heart” in pursuing Jesus. As mentioned, the writer (John Eldridge) said that at some stage in one's life it is as if our Heavenly Father takes his role as Father in our lives with the intention to form us for His purpose. I realized in looking back, that God is full of grace and love in not telling us exactly what He is planning, for I fear if we knew beforehand where He were taking us, we would not follow Him. Personally, when I heard, come follow Me, I jumped at the opportunity to follow Him, knowing that in following Jesus, I would be with Him. The best place to be, as it is written *“if God is for us who can be against us”*.

The time of my departure arrived much faster than I anticipated, and I could not sleep the night before my departure. I believe it was a mixture of hopeful expectation of what God was going to do and fear of not knowing what to expect. The next morning, the Alabanza team took me to the airport. They waited with me, encouraging me and praying for me. During that waiting period surrounded by brothers and sisters in faith I had a sense of going on a mission for God, and I felt privileged and honored that I have been called by the Creator of Heaven and earth to follow Him on the mission He prepared for me.

The reality of the adventure that was before me only became apparent the moment I sat down in the airplane, knowing it had begun. I took the farewell card the Alabanza team gave me in my hand, reading through the messages, I praised God for the opportunity to serve Him.

As the plane took off from the runway, I felt joy that can only be explained as the “joy of the Lord”. The flight gave me ample time to pray, and I could lay my fears and expectations before the Lord, almost like a David ending in praising the Lord for knowing that I could trust Him, because my life was in His hands.

Landing in Egypt.

One might think that during the flight I had enough time to prepare for my arrival in Egypt, but nothing could prepare me! The plane landed just after midnight, and everybody on the plane obviously had an itinerary of some sort and seemed to be well-organized for their departure from the airport leaving me to wait alone.

As I came to the exit of the airport there was some activity, realizing it was taxi drivers waiting for potential customers I approached them without knowing where to go. They, on the other hand, had a list of potential destinations for me, the one being more expensive than the other.

I explained to one of them that I do not have enough money to pay and he suggested to take me to downtown Cairo. We got into his taxi and drove past all the luxury places. Finally, we arrived at an area that had only a few streetlights, no robots, and traffic seemed to be very aggressive. He stopped at a hotel and entered with me, even at half past one in the morning there was a man very excited to receive me, he took me to a room that he rented out for 5 U\$.

Just as I prepared to go to sleep, there was a knock on the door. The same man who brought me to the room asked if I would come with him to get something to eat and a coffee on the house. Thankful, I agreed but soon realized that he was more than willing to give me an itinerary for my stay in Egypt. I explained that I will be traveling to Israel and only want to see the pyramids.

Back in my room I praised the Lord for opening the door so that I could have a place to sleep. After only a few hours' sleep, I had to meet the man for breakfast, and he explained to me that the taxi driver will take me to see the pyramids but that he did not know of any transport to Israel.

The drive to the pyramids and back took only a few hours and then I proceeded to find a way to travel to Israel. Walking to Cairo only to discover that the bus that used to go to Israel from one of the luxury hotels do not travel anymore. I went back to the downtown bus stop and asked for a bus traveling in the direction of Israel that would get me as close as possible to the border. I had to wait at the bus station as the specific bus was only leaving that night.

While waiting I took out the CD player and listened to the CD "it's all about Jesus" An Egyptian child asked if he could listen to my music, he enjoyed it, so much I decided to give him the CD in faith that he may receive the gift of salvation in Jesus Christ.

As the bus departed on the way to Israel, I just knew that God is a faithful God, all we need to do is to trust in Him. During the journey I fell asleep, and as they woke me up in the dark they showed me the road towards the border. Traveling with my backpack on foot I arrived at the Egypt border. The Egyptian authority opened my backpack and took out my bible, asking me what it is, as I explained to them, they seemed very happy to let me go.

As I left Egypt I felt a relief, as if the worst part of the journey was over and that I could relax. Little did I know.

Entering Israel.

When I came to the Israeli border, I expected to be welcomed. Instead, I was confronted with a question, where are you from? I answered "from south Africa" it seemed as if I said the unthinkable. They rejected my answer, no that cannot be, they said.

I presented them with the letter I received from the Jewish council in South Africa, but to no avail. They said I must unpack my backpack, which I did with a smile on my face. I suppose it was not the best thing to do as it might have appeared as some form of arrogance.

After they searched my luggage they said I should go in to a room and undress, again I complied with no resistance. After finding nothing of suspicion I thought that it is over and that they will allow me to enter.

They took my passport and the letter from the Jewish Council and returned after a long time saying that I am denied entering Israel. I was shocked and answered them that God told me to come to Israel. They did not respond and left me with the words that I cannot enter Israel. I decided to focus on what God said, "If He is for us who can be against us". I took my Bible and started reading the Bible, still sitting in the waiting area of the border.

After some time they came to confirm that I am not allowed to enter Israel, and I would reply "But God said I must come". I decided not to focus on them and their opinion and continued to read the Bible, building my faith in what God could do.

Eventually they returned saying that I can enter, but that they will only give me a month entry permit since my plane ticket was only valid for one month. I rejoiced in the Lord for He is good, and His faithfulness endures forever, singing songs of joy in my heart.

As I passed into Israel I realized that just as in the days of Caleb and Joshua, faith is a requirement to enter the promised land. The word of the pastor's wife resounded that Egypt is the body, the desert the soul and Israel the Spirit, realizing that God took me this way to show me that in order for us to enter the promise of God we need to die to our flesh (the humiliation of being told what to do), the emotions of despair and need to stand firm in faith based on what God said. I was reminded of the word in Hebrews 4:2 *"for Good News has also been proclaimed to us, just as it was to them. But the message they heard didn't do them any good, because those who heard it*

did not combine it with trust”.

The next step was to get to Tel Aviv, one thing that is great about Israel is their public transport, so I took a bus. The bus was filled with soldiers and as I sat down relieved that I found myself in Israel. Looking through the window, seeing the desert, I could not contain myself and started to laugh. One of the soldiers asked me why I was laughing and my response was, only God can call this the promised land, for only He can make something out of nothing, at the same time thinking about myself and my life.

Test of faith

Finally, as I got into the SAR-EL program, and found myself relaxed and enjoying my stay and the companionship of all the volunteers. We prayed and worked together, all with the same mind to support Israel. The time in SAR-EL was amazing, it was more like an all-expenses paid holiday, all I had to do was to assist the people of Israel and for me personally it was a pleasure.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:13, that the Lord will not allow us to be tested beyond our strength. I believe the reason being, that the Lord is our strength. Psalm 28:7-8 reminds us that *“ADONAI is my strength and shield; in him my heart trusted, and I have been helped. Therefore my heart is filled with joy, and I will sing praises to him. ADONAI is strength for [his people], a stronghold of salvation to his anointed”*. Based on God’s Word we know that the Lord will protect us, for He has proven it repeatedly. The choice to choose to trust in the Lord is however not always as easy as one would imagine, especially since you need to make the choice without knowing the outcome, only knowing that if God is for you who can be against you.

Out of the blue and totally unexpected the test of my faith came. I was still enjoying the relaxed environment within the SAR-EL program, with the expectation, based on other people on the same program, that I would be able to stay there for as long as I wanted to stay. However, one morning after being there only 2 and a half weeks I was notified that I had to leave the program at the end of the 3rd week since I still had to get back to Egypt for my flight back home. It came not only as a shock in the sense that I had to leave, but also unable to understand how this could be the fulfillment of God’s plan for me, as He sent me to the mountain of Israel - Ezekiel 36:1.

I asked one of the fellow Christians to pray with me, for I wanted to know the Lord’s plan in all of this. As we prayed the Lord gave me the verse in Genesis 26:2 *“ADONAI appeared to him and said, "Don't go down into Egypt, but live where I tell you.”* With the mentioned in mind, I left for Tel Aviv as a familiar place. I was in need of someone to encourage me or direct me and decided to phone my mother. After I told her the whole story, she said “you must decide if you are going to obey God or not”. I believe that the Lord used her as an instrument to help me to focus on Him, to walk by faith and not by sight.

With one week left on my visa, realizing I will lose my plane ticket back to South Africa, I decided to obey God's Word not to go back to Egypt. This meant that I had to follow Him step by step, there was no plan.

During our previous visit to Tel Aviv with SAR-EL we met with a ministry called "Holy Land Ministry" as we visited their church service during the weekend. I decided to go to them and to ask if they could assist me. They agreed to help me while I still had a visa. I stayed at the men's ministry, assisting them where I could for that week.

On the Friday, knowing that my visa expired on Monday, one of the people that prayed with me at SAR-EL visited me with a plan. He suggested that I travel to Jordan and back to get a new visa at the border.

We traveled together to Jerusalem to meet Gerrit Nel to ask him for assistance as he had before, however, we arrived too late since Shabbat was about to start. Gerrit took us to a shabbat meal and during the time he mentioned whether if I do not need to go to Israel's mountain. I explained to him that I received the Word from the Lord to go to the mountain of Israel, Ezekiel 36:1. and he agreed to take us there after shabbat, on Saturday night.

Israel is a Messianic Jew who loves the Lord with a prophetic ministry. Gerrit calls it Israel's mountain based on Israel staying there, although the place is formally known as Samuel's Mountain. The same place from where Samuel the prophet judged over Israel. Israel looked like a prophet of old and during the visit he did not even speak to me. As we left I asked him if I could stay there and he replied, yes, you must. For me that was enough confirmation, so we went back to Jerusalem and on Sunday I returned with my luggage to Israel's mountain. The Word the Lord spoke to me through Ezekiel 36:1 came into fulfillment, still FAITH, as a Free Adventure In Trusting Him, has no destination; it is a continuous walk with the Lord.

Who do you trust

Back with Israel I informed him my visa was about to expire. He told me that he could help if I were prepared to sign a contract with him, committing myself to help him for the next 3 months. I believe it was a security requirement from the Israeli government to ensure that people do not just travel around without knowing where they are supposed to be. At that moment I just felt I could not commit to him as I already committed to the Lord. I did, however, tell him that I will be with him for as long as the Lord requires me to be. Consequently, I had to go to the internal affairs office without a letter or an invite, asking for an extension on my visa.

What else can I say, there is a part of a scripture in 2 Chronicles 16:9 that come to mind *“For the eyes of ADONAI move here and there throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong on behalf of those who are wholehearted toward him.....”* At the office they gave me a form to complete and as I handed in the form, they gave me a small piece of paper serving as an appointment for a visa application and as a proof that I am legally in Israel. God blessed me with a few extensions/appointments, resulting in me staying on the mountain for 5 months!

The time on the mountain was my training ground, God in His wisdom chose for me. In the next part of this Free Adventure in Trusting Him, I would like to share some of the lessons I learned during my stay on the mountain with Israel Auerbach.

The first lesson - A true love relationship

When arriving back on the mountain after receiving my visa, Israel sat down with me and explained about the Lord and His love for us. He then demonstrated how we should express our love for the Lord. He took his guitar and started praising the Lord through songs of praise. What struck me the most was that he did not sing songs known to me or pre-recorded songs. Every song he sang was from his heart.

As he explained to me that when we sing, we should sing unto the Lord, not for the Lord. What came to mind was what Paul said to Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:5 *“The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”* It was as if the Lord was directing me to understand, that love must flow from within, reminding me of what Jesus said to the women at Jacobs well in John 4:14 *“... whoever drinks the water I will give him will never be thirsty again! On the contrary, the water I give him will become a spring of water inside him, welling up into eternal life!”* and eternal life as in John 17: 3 *“And eternal life is this: to know you, the one true God, and him whom you sent, Yeshua the Messiah.”*

The Lord used Israel to show me that praise is an internal knowing of God and His Son. One of the Hebrew words for praise is halal, the pictograph of the word is a man holding his hands in the air as in worship followed by a shepherd staff. Explanation would be “behold the Shepherd (leader)”. We must praise Him based on who He is for me personally and then communally, for if I do not have that personal love relationship, the praise will flow from knowledge and not from an intimate relationship based on a personal knowledge and experience founded in love.

The second lesson - Faith is an act of trusting

Like love being an act of obedience, I had to learn that faith is an act of trusting. Faith is not just to say you believe. It is to act within that belief by trusting not in yourself and your own inability but to trust in the Lord and His ability.

This was a lesson learned through suffering and it took time. Israel allowed me to stay with him on the mountain, but it was not about staying, it was about working. Israel had a few sheep, goats and donkeys that needed to be attended to, and that was part of my privilege of staying there. When I say privilege, I mean privilege for it was through attending after his flock that the Lord taught me.

One of my responsibilities was to take the flock down the mountain side to a place where they could graze, while I watched over them as a shepherd. At night I had to take them back up the mountain, guarding over them as a real shepherd. I thought of David while I was shepherding the flock reading the Psalms he wrote.

Shepherding was also physically tough on me, especially since I did not have a lot to eat. I was working very hard, relying on my own strength. As I became physically very weak I concluded that it might be too much for me, I wrote a letter to my mother saying I think I missed the Lord and that I will most properly die in Israel. I could not send the letter as I did not have any means of sending it.

One day while taking the donkeys up the mountain, looking at where I needed to go, I just felt that I could not continue any longer. In that situation, I felt that the Lord said unto me, *"do not look where you are going but look at your feet for My Word is a lamp unto your feet and a light to your path"* as in Psalm 119:105. Based on what I heard from the Lord, I started to look down at my feet while pulling the donkeys up the mountain and start receiving new strength, rejoicing once again in the Lord. My situation did not change but what changed was that I found my strength as I started to look at the Lord, as it is written Philippians 4:13 *"I can do all things through him who gives me power."*

I wrote a second letter to my mother, knowing I will not be able to send it, but for me and my relationship with the Lord. In the letter I said to my mother, here I am, asking the Lord to use me as His special soldier of faith, and as the training started, I wanted to die. The joy of the Lord directed me

and the Word of God became more of a reality as in Psalms 55:22 *"Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved."*

The Lord sustained me; it was nothing of myself.

The third lesson - The Lord's eyes on us, He is omnipresent!

Now that I started to rejoice in the Lord, my relationship with Israel also improved. During one of our conversations, he said that I should ask the Lord for a song, and then I should sing the song unto the Lord. Well as I waited on the Lord for a song, I believe the Lord gave me the following song.

Jesus, I Love Jesus
He is my Savior my only Salvation
He gave His life for me to live
I love You Lord
I worship You
I lay my life for You to take
To guide my way into Your will
I love You Lord
I worship You
So take my hand and guide my way
To glorify Your Holy Name
I love You Lord
I worship You
So set me free to serve you Lord
I love You Lord.

As I was singing this song unto the Lord, the scripture of Psalms 96:1 was imprinted on my mind. I read it and was totally amazed by the Lord's love! It said: *"Sing to ADONAI a new song! Sing to ADONAI, all the earth! There is no word that can explain how I rejoiced knowing that the Lord's eyes were upon me, and that He was there with me listening to the song I am singing unto Him!*

For the first time the truth of God's Word spoke to me, knowing that God is not only omnipresent in a sense that He is everywhere, no He is omnipresent in each one of us, in our daily life. He knows what we speak, what we think and that is why Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 6:31-33 : *"So don't be anxious, asking, 'What will we eat?,' 'What will we drink?' or 'How will we be clothed?' For it is the pagans who set their hearts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

Fourth Lesson - God provides more than enough.

The Lord opened my eyes concerning a life wholly devoted unto Him, not based on anything, but a desire to be in a relationship based on love from a pure heart, a clear conscience and a true belief as in 1 Timothy 1:5 *“The purpose of this order is to promote love from a clean heart, from a good conscience and from sincere trust”*, not lust based on self-indulgence but pure unadulterated love.

One day while sitting with Israel, he said that he was hungry a statement that I agreed with wholeheartedly. He continued saying that he will ask the Lord to provide according to our needs. Based on my previous experience of knowing that the Lord is active within our daily lives as HE watches over us, I added my eager “Amen” confirming what he asked of the Lord in love.

During the day, while watching over the donkeys and the sheep, I heard a commotion at the top of the mountain but could not identify what I heard. That night after I took the donkeys and the sheep back, Israel said he wanted to show me something. He told me to bring a bucket with, I followed his guidance. He then took me to a mountain of potatoes that was dropped there earlier the day. It was fresh lovely potatoes. We filled the buckets and went home.

At home he said to me, you see that is why I am afraid to pray for food. What are we going to do with all these potatoes. He had the heart of sharing God’s provision with those who are less fortunate. While we were preparing a meal for ourselves with the potatoes, he asked me, how will we be able to get these potatoes to those who need them? His concern for others apart from himself and me, made me realize that our prayers are often concerned with our own needs, without acknowledging the needs of others.

God's provision is always more than enough, the question is, do we ask God based on our trust in His ability or do we ask based on our own desires and fear of lack. James 4:3 said *“Or you pray and don't receive, because you pray with the wrong motive, that of wanting to indulge your own desires..”*

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray He showed them as it is written in Matthew 6 :9-13 *“You, therefore, pray like this: 'Our Father in heaven! May your Name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us the food we need today. Forgive us what we have done wrong, as we too have forgiven those who have wronged us. And do not lead us into hard testing, but keep us safe from the Evil One. For kingship, power and glory are yours forever. Amen.”*

Based on this prayer, I realized that Jesus wants us to focus on the communal need more than that of self.

Fifth Lesson - Do not harden your heart.

The Lord used a donkey to teach Balaam a lesson. Since one of my responsibilities was to take the donkeys down the mountain for grazing. Based on all the lessons I have learned, one of the lessons I learnt is that we need to be willing and open to listen when the Lord wants to teach us.

One thing that stood out about the donkeys was their stubbornness or resistance to learn. Every day we had the same routine, I would take them down the mountain to graze and as there was no water, when I took them back up the mountain, I would take them to drink water first before returning to their shelter. Knowing that, the donkeys would still refuse to freely walk up the mountain, I always had to pull them up the mountain one by one or sometimes two to three.

Then one day while dragging the one donkey up the mountain towards the water trough, I felt the Lord saying - we are like these donkeys, always resisting. The Lord, in His love wants to bring us to the water of life so that we can drink and never thirst again, but we resist His gentle pull, fighting against the blessing the Lord wants to give us.

As I considered this, thinking that after doing the same thing the donkey would have learned to trust me, but it was always the same story! However, once the donkey sees the water he would willingly run to the water to drink.

I realized that the Lord was teaching me that as the donkey's refusal to trust in the outcome of being pulled up the mountain will lead to the blessing of the water, so many of our refusal to walk by faith as we trust in the Lord, is to our own detrimental.

Trust is the ability to give oneself into the Hands of the Lord without seeing where He is going but trusting Him that He has your best interest in mind. Reminding us of 1 Corinthians 2:9 saying "...*No eye has seen, no ear has heard and no one's heart has imagined all the things that God has prepared for those who love him*"

Proverbs 3:5-6

*"Trust in ADONAI with all your heart;
do not rely on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him;
then he will level your paths".*

Sixth Lesson - Keep close to the Lord.

In the Bible we read that God used a lost donkey to show Samuel who to anoint king over Israel. This, although not relevant to the teaching that the Lord gave me, is an indication that the Lord can use anything as all things submit to His authority.

One day while looking after the donkeys, a white donkey came to the grazing field all by himself. He had a long rope around his neck, so I knew he belonged to someone else. When I told Israel about the donkey, he said I must do according to scripture and bring it in with the other donkeys, so that we can look after it until his owner came looking for it. This donkey had a different attitude, unlike the other donkeys. This donkey willingly followed me, without any resistance.

The next morning, when I took the donkeys down, this new donkey as mentioned was different. Instead of me pulling him, he wanted to run. This was a great new experience for me, so I started running with the donkey, still holding the rope in my hand. As the donkey started running faster, I gave him more rope so that he could run. However, at some point running down the mountain, I realized that I cannot contain the donkey anymore. He was running too fast, and I did not have enough rope left to gradually pull him in. I had no option but to let go of the rope.

As I let go of the rope and the donkey continued to run, the Lord spoke to me. The Lord said that the rope of the donkey is how I could guide the donkey. The moment I let go of the rope; I lost my ability to guide the donkey according to my will or direction. The mistake I made was that as I was running with the donkey I allowed him to move away from me, I giving him more rope, and in so doing I lost my ability to guide him.

The Lord then explained to me that His Word, living within us through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, is His Hand guiding over us. His covenant is an everlasting covenant, and He will never let go of it, being faithful to do what He promised. We however can decide to move away from God as we allow ourselves to move away from God's guiding hand, the Holy Spirit, as we choose to disobey.

Saul was anointed by God, but as he chose to walk in disobedience the Spirit of the Living God departed from Him. Paul warned us in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22 *"Don't quench the Spirit, don't despise inspired messages. But do test everything—hold onto what is good, but keep away from every form of evil."*

Seventh Lesson - Surrender.

The Lord taught me a lot during my stay on the mountain but this lesson although intertwined with all I have learned stood out. Some might see surrender as an involuntary giving up of one's rights due to being overpowered. However within the Bible the idea of surrender is more based on a voluntary adherence to God and His will, referring to the word HINENI (here I am) as in Isaiah 6:8 *"Then I heard the voice of Adonai saying, "Whom should I send? Who will go for us?" I answered, "I'm here, send me!"*

In general, we tend to consider our options regarding the possibility of surrendering. However, today I am grateful that I had no other options than to surrender unto the Lord and His will. It all came about after staying on the mountain for almost 4 months and a week. I received a Word from the Lord saying to me that my time on the mountain was completed and Israel confirmed the Word, saying the Lord spoke to him as well.

At that time, I had no means of traveling back to South Africa and I had no money to buy an airplane ticket. The situation led me to conclude that I will have to walk back to South Africa, an idea that sounded crazy and impossible. However the more I thought of all the miracles the Lord had done for me, the more the possibility of being able to do it became a reality. Israel was prepared to give me one of his donkeys as a companion to help carrying the load. Both of us were completely at peace with the idea, knowing that what seems impossible for us is possible for God.

I realized that total surrender is when we say unto the Lord, we will trust Him regardless of our circumstances. The amazing part was that as soon as I came to that point of total surrender, a tour bus filled with South African tourists came to the mountain. Something that never happened during my stay on the mountain. Israel, realizing it was South Africans called me and introduced me to them. They asked me to say something, I testified of God's goodness, and they invited me to pray with them. As they prayed for me, they blessed me with enough money to get an airplane ticket from Israel to South Africa. I was overwhelmed at what the Lord had done for me.

I booked my flight back to South Africa. The morning I had to leave for the airport. I phoned a taxi to take me to the airport, the taxi was however too expensive and I had to decline. Much to my surprise, the taxi driver phoned me back to inform me that he is on his way and explained that one of his passengers offered to pay my taxi fare. Praise God for He is good and His goodness endures forever!

The Lord taught me many more lessons on the mountain, now I know that "Faith" does not start with preaching but responding in obedience. Love is an act of your will, the Hebrew word for love is "AHAVAH" which means from a Hebrew perspective (not translated) covenant loyalty. As Jesus explained in John 14:15 *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments."*