

## A WORD IN SEASON

(Isaiah 50:4; Prov. 15:23; 25:11)

A word fitly spoken and in due season is like apples of gold in settings of silver (Prov. 25: 11). A word fitly spoken and in due season is music to one's ear. It encourages and lifts one up in time of emotional and physical needs. Blessed is the person who knows how to bless others with fitly spoken words. Job's so called friends caused him great pain with their unfit spoken words. In his frustration he asked them, How long will you vex and torment me and break me in pieces with words? Have pity on me, have pity on me, O my friends, for the hand of God has touched me! (Job 19: 1, 21) Job's friends had come to him when they heard about his misfortune. They came from different regions to comfort their friend, Job. They had good intentions and were sincerely sorry for Job's situation, as we read in Job 2:12-13: And when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came each one from his own place, Eliphaz, the Temanite. As a Temanite, he was from an ancient city or town called Teman, a region in Edom. He was an Edomite, descendant from Esau; and Bildad the Shuhite was a descendant of Shuah, son of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. 25:1-2). This was a region on the western side of Chaldea, bordering on Arabia; Zophar the Naamathite was from Naamah, in Canaan. They all traveled as much as 250 miles to visit Job. They came to console and to comfort Job. When they looked from afar off and saw him beyond recognition, they lifted up their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe, and they cast dust over their heads toward the heavens. So they sat down with (Job) on the ground for seven days and seven nights, and none spoke a word to him, for they saw that his grief and pain were very great (Job 2:12-13).

While they spoke no words, they felt Job's pain. The moment they opened their mouth however, their eyes and ears were closed to Job's needs. Accusations then became the theme of their words; because they no longer could comfort Job, their words became more like a thorn in Job's emotions. They did not offer Job words that were fitly spoken in the season to console Job in his suffering, for "A word fitly spoken and in due season" is a word of comfort, encouragement, it is a word that brings hope, word that edifies. When we do not know what to say in view of one's great suffering, it is best to apply silence and offer a hug mingled with tears. Tears are liquid words, as someone has said. They express emotions that words cannot and they become like "apples of gold in settings of silver". Because the tongue is the organ used to express words, it must be gentle toward the one in need, in order to bring healing to the heart. Salomon said, "A gentle tongue is a tree of life" (Prov. 15: 4). From that gentle tongue comes healing and peace. The tongue carries the power of death and life (Prov. 18:21). Many have committed suicide when the weapon from words pierced their souls. When words is used a weapon, it affects the entire body like a destructive fire. James so defined it: And the tongue is a fire, a world of wickedness set among our members, contaminating and depraving the whole

body and setting on fire the wheel of birth, being itself ignited by hell; for every kind of beast and bird of reptile and sea animal, can be tamed and has been tamed by human; but the human tongue can be tamed by no man. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison, with it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men who were made in God's likeness! (James 3:6-10). King David prayed, I have purposed that my mouth shall not transgress (Psalm 17: 3). Transgression is a word that defines overstepping or going beyond the boundaries. When we use words as a weapon to hurt someone, we overstep the boundaries of freedom against the person. Freedom is a beautiful thing when equally sided. One -sided freedom crushes, chains and destroys the right to freedom given to all.

The psalmist said, I will take heed and guard my ways that I may sin not with my tongue (Psalm 39:1a). I will be careful to guard my ways in the direction my tongue moves not to sin against my God and my neighbor. A controlled tongue edifies, builds and encourages lives. The world is full of people waiting for words that are fitly spoken in due time. Knowing how to speak a word of comfort to the weary and hopeless is like rain falling on a dry and thirsty land; it is like removing a heavy load from someone's heart. YAHSHUA said that by our words we will be either justified or condemned. Words are thoughts expressed in sounds that come from the heart. He asked the question: How can you speak good things when you are evil? For out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks. (Matt. 12: 34-37). Words are expressions from inside our heart. When our heart is in tune with God's words brings healing to the heart of the hurting. How beautiful is the mouth of those who speak words that are fitted for the time, rescuing and building bridges of love and peace! Paul's desire was that we would rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. Living in harmony with one another is a step to understand one's pain.

And whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord YAHSHUA and His Person, giving praise to God the Father through Him (Col. 3:17). Our deeds are merely seeds from our heart. If good, we will reflect God's love through kind and aptly words; if bad, we will reflect the evil residing in our heart, as Solomon well defined: The thoughts of the wicked are shamefully vile and exceedingly offensive to the Lord, but the words of the pure are pleasing words to Him (Prov. 15: 26). In a multitude of words, says Solomon, transgression is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is prudent; the tongues of those who are upright and in right standing with God are as a choice silver; the lips of the righteous feed and guide many (Prov. 10: 19a- 21). Empty words are idle words. YAHSHUA had this to say, But I tell you, on the day of judgment men will have to give account for every idle word they speak; for by your words you will be justified and acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned and sentenced (Matt. 12:36- 37).

So let our words be few and righteous before God and men; pray as David prayed, Lord set a guard before my mouth; keep watch at the door of my lips ( Psalm 141:3).