

Interview with D.K. (Kehilat Nachalat Yeshua), Shabbat School Seminar Beer Sheva, 23/9/09

D.K. is a Shabbat School teacher and is also on the worship team.

*How did you come to the faith?*

I was born into family of believers. As a child, I took part in the services, but I wasn't a believer myself, I didn't know God personally. When I was about 15, I began to ask myself questions, such as "What is the truth?", "Is there really a God who loves me?", "Why am I here?".

By the grace of God, through reading scripture and because of things that happened in my life, God spoke to me and drew me to Him. It was a process. One day, I felt the need to praise God. Afterwards, I opened my bible and read Romans 8:38-39, that nothing can separate us from the love of God. Suddenly I was filled with confidence and faith. I understood that this is the truth and that I had been born into a new life.

*How did you come to serve as a Shabbat School teacher?*

I love kids. I feel connected to them and I feel comfortable speaking with them. One of the most important things to me is serving in this area, leading children to God. The principle goal is that the children will come to the Lord. I personally want to lead them to the love that I know.

But this desire wasn't enough for me [to become a Shabbat School teacher]. I needed to know that it was God's will for me to serve in this area. I wanted to teach the children, and I wanted to know that it was God's will for me to do so. I asked God, I sought answers from the Bible, to know if He wanted me to serve in this area. After a few months, the answer came in the form of an announcement during service that they needed Shabbat School teachers. I continued to seek God's will and He answered with a verse, Romans 12:13 ("contributing to the needs of the saints" NAS). I realized that there was a need to contribute to, and that it was time I gave of myself for a holy service. And so I became a Shabbat School teacher, with the faith that this was God's will for me.

*What motivates you, as a Shabbat School teacher?*

At first, it was the belief that God wanted me to contribute to the needs of children's ministry. Now that I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that it is God's will for me to serve in this ministry, what motivates me is a love for the kids and a recognition of the value of their lives, in Messiah.

*Describe the children's ministry in your congregation.*

The most important thing is the Word of God. We use God's word and are led in truth. Our lessons begin with prayer. We talk a bit about the week. The Lord puts things on my heart to share, and questions to ask. During the lesson, we read from the scriptures, the kids read themselves, at this age (grades 3-5). I engage them so that they'll understand the message. We do activities, draw, put on plays; anything to demonstrate that the scriptures aren't detached from reality. We learn verses off by heart.

At first, I used booklets (like HaOgen), but after awhile, I started preparing my own lessons, according what God put on my heart (for instance, lessons about the fruits of

the Spirit). I saw that God was the leader and that He was teaching me how to teach the children.

*What challenges do you encounter as a Shabbat School teacher?*

There are discipline problems. At first, it was difficult to control the children. But through that, the Lord taught me to pray for discipline in the classroom. I tried it my own way and failed, and I understood that anyone who maintains the discipline in the classroom, does it by the power of God, not by his own.

Because of discipline problems, during the first few months, I felt a sort of burden. Something was bothering me, influencing my thoughts. That's when I understood that I was serving from a sense of duty and not from a desire to serve. God convicted me that I need to do everything out of love. Ministry work can only be done with the help of God. And so I began with a renewed mind. Now, the children are more disciplined, although still not 100%. I feel more connected to them, and they, to me.

Not long ago, I returned from Korea, where the Lord taught me things that will help me as a teacher. I need to relinquish my desires and my expectations, even if I think they're wonderful things. I need to take hold of God's will and to walk the road that I believe God paved for me to walk with the children, in faith.

*What challenges do the children encounter?*

Openness; some of the children are closed. Obedience and discipline. The world also influences the kids.

Some of the kids have told their classmates about Yeshua. As a result, some of the other children reject them. The kids see the opposition of the world to the faith. The world also influences them: the lack of discipline in the classroom is parallel to the lack of order in the world.

We can see the influence of the family, the "source of all", on the children. [We have] a responsibility to teach the kids, but the parents have a much greater responsibility to raise the children in the fear of the Lord.

*What do you find rewarding about children's ministry?*

[I have] joy, because I have the full assurance that God is happy with what I'm doing. It amazes me that my service makes the Lord of hosts glad.

*What is your impression of the seminar?*

I received encouragement from the lessons themselves. I enjoyed [the seminar]. I was impressed; I didn't know there were so many Messianic organizations [that produce material for children]. God is working. The messages helped. [The seminar] was relevant and interesting.

*On what topics would you like to see a seminar?*

How to teach the gospel of the Messiah to the children. How to teach it in a way that it doesn't come from the head, but from the heart, this gospel that we live and were crucified into, also.