

Flywheel

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Today my subject is knowing God. I've been thinking about this for quite a while. We know in the future; everyone will know God. Turn to Jeremiah 31:33, this is a very, very familiar scripture.

Jeremiah 31:33 *But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

34) No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD, for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.' (NKJV)

We know that that's going to happen in the future. That is pictured during the Feast of Tabernacles time. If you turn to Hebrews 8:10—I'm not going to read it because it's the exact quote, word for word—it's applied to us, the New Covenant church. We've been called to know Yehovah right now. So, how are we doing? Do we know Yehovah as well as we should? As well as we could? Could we know Him better? Frankly, what is at stake here? The title of my sermon is:

Flywheel

That's kind of an odd name for a sermon but I'm going to use a flywheel as a metaphor. My disclaimer is that I am not a mechanic. I know very little about internal combustion engines, so this is just a metaphor; nothing but a metaphor. In an internal combustion engine, you have a flywheel that is a big disc that spins around and around and creates momentum. It's actually where the starter engages and gets it going. It's connected to the crankshaft, which is connected to the rods, connected to the pistons. It makes a piston go down and suck in gas, it makes the piston go up and compress the gas and then you have this explosion, the piston is knocked down, it spins the crank shaft and then the piston goes back up to push the exhaust gas out and then it comes back down, sucking in new fuel and then goes around and around. That's how a 4-stroke engine works. Without the flywheel you couldn't get it started. It carries momentum through the different processes.

In my metaphor, the four points on the flywheel are:

1. Hearing Yehovah and then doing what He tells us to do.
2. Doing what He tells us to do.
3. Evaluating ourselves and thinking.
4. Talking to Yehovah in prayer.

So, it's hearing, doing, thinking, talking; reading, repenting, meditating, praying. Some quick examples—then we'll unpack each one of these—we will go to Genesis 12:1.

Genesis 12:1 *Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. (NKJV)*

Hearing. Verse 4.

4) So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him ... (NKJV)

So he took action.

Let's go to 2 Corinthians 13 for a quick example of thinking.

2 Corinthians 13:5 *Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? —unless indeed you are disqualified. (NKJV)*

Now let's go to Matthew 7:7.

Matthew 7:7 *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*

8) For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

9) Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

10) Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11) If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! (NKJV)

Let's look at all four of these in one passage in Philippians 4.

Philippians 4:6 *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;*

7) and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8) Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

9) The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. (NKJV)

So, the flywheel consists of:

1. Hearing God—listening, reading.
2. Doing—taking action, repenting.
3. Evaluating—self examination, meditating.
4. Talking to Yehovah—prayer, asking for what we're lacking.

Why are these four things so important? If you think about it, they're really important to every relationship in our lives. What happens in a relationship is one person doesn't listen to the other? Or if one party doesn't feel hurt? Have you ever known someone who did most of the talking and you couldn't get a word in edge wise? Or they talk over you and belittling you, making what you say not important and you don't feel heard. These folks aren't really interested in you, they're self-absorbed. They are more interested in what they have to say than you.

I heard a story one time that was told by Jay Abraham, one of my business teachers. He was over in China suffering from jet lag in a giant hotel—unable to sleep in the middle of the night, so he goes to the concierge room where the high rollers have a bar and hors d'oeuvres and all that, 24/7. He saw another guy there and they struck up a conversation. This guy was involved in world economics and so Jay entered a conversation with him and found out what he did and then he just started asking questions. What do you do? How do you do it? How does it work? How does that work over in this country? How does it work in this country? What do you about this interference or this problem, how do you deal with this? They had a talk for a couple of hours. Then they both realized they got to be on stage tomorrow so they need to go back and get some sleep. As they were saying goodbye, the guy that Jay met said, "You are the most interesting guy I think I have ever met". And all Jay did was ask questions and show curiosity. The lesson is, to be interesting, you have to be interested. You have to be curious and interested.

So the question is, are we demonstrating every day that we are interested in what Yehovah has to say? Are we actively listening? An important part of every relationship is active listening. Now we do that by reading His word and demonstrating our interest by being curious and looking things up. Saying, "I wonder what that means, I wonder what that is" and actually digging into His word. Sadly, most people spend more time on entertainment. They spend more time every day watching TV than they do actively engaged in developing a relationship with Yehovah. Being curious and showing interest in His word. We see that this addiction to entertainment hurts human relationships too. "Don't interrupt me, the TV is on" "I'm watching the TV, leave me alone". You see that. Actively listening lets the other person know if you are really committed to the relationship or whether you are self absorbed.

Mama said, "Actions speak louder than words". So what happens in a relationship if our actions are communicating disinterest? If our actions aren't syncing with our words? People can pick up on our priorities by how we live our lives. They know if we value a relationship with them by our actions. When a friend asks us to do something, how do we respond? Do we do it? Do we make excuses? Do we promise we'll do it? We'll do it when we get around to it? How do we respond? That is communicating to our friend.

How diligent are we in following Yehovah's instructions? What is our level of interest and acting on what we read? On our application? How fast do we act? Do we make excuses?

I'm embarrassed to say that I have done all of the above. I repent and try not to be that way but it happens. Do we get creative in deciding to do or what not to do? Or do we just decide to not think about it? Where might we be compromising?

Let's talk about thinking. What do we think about? Are we dwelling on God's word? Are we curious? Are we evaluating ourselves? Are we reading or engaging with Yehovah's word as a daily habit? How much time do we spend thinking and in self evaluation? Are we evaluating and thinking about what we're going to change? How we're going to change it? Are we setting goals in overcoming? When we are reading Yehovah's word, is it convicting us?

When I read through the prophets, it's kind of depressing because I see that all the accusations of the prophets against Israel and against Judah. They apply to us today. It's kind of depressing; it's not like painting a shiny image of the human character. It brings one to repentance. If we're not in that state of constant repentance, then we just aren't engaging with God's word.

Talking; what do we pray about? What are we seeking to understand? In a human relationship, what happens if one person stops talking to the other? Or they are short, they're brief, they're not interested? When the flywheels stop spinning, an engine dies. So, what are the things that can stop our spiritual flywheel? I want to turn over to Revelation 1:1—we're going to start there—but these are the messages to the churches. The churches are the ecclesia; these are the people called by God. This is not to the world; this is to the church brethren. He's addressing specifically the behaviors that can stop the flywheel. The flaws in humans. Revelation 1 sets the stage because we need to know who is doing the talking and who He's talking to and why He is talking. So we're going to start with Revelation 1:1.

Revelation 1:1 *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,*
2) *who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.*
3) *Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.*
4) *John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,*
5) *and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,*

6) and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

7) Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

8) "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

9) I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

10) I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

11) saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

12) Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands,

13) and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

14) His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;

15) His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

16) He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

17) And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

18) I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

19) Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

20) The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches. (NKJV)

Let's flip back over to Matthew 5 and look at what the purpose is of a lampstand.

Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

15) Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (NKJV)

The purpose of the lampstand represents the churches in Revelation and we're going to start in chapter 2. This is the message to the first church.

Revelation 2:1 *To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:*

2) *"I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;*

3) *and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.*

4) *Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*

5) *Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.*

6) *But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*

7) *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."* (NKJV)

You see here a church, a group, that is suffering from apathy. The flywheel is spinning a little slower than it should. In business, most customers—the number one reason that customers leave, is because of apathy. The relationship becomes taken for granted. The number one reason employees leave is because they don't feel appreciated. The number one reason that a lot of relationships don't work out is because people don't feel appreciated; they are taken for granted. When one of our loved ones dies, it's always a wish or a regret—I wish I had shown more appreciation for that person. I wish I had spent time a little differently.

This Nicolaitans is going to come up a couple of times and I know there is a lot of theory and controversy over what that might be. In the commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, I like what it said because it's general and symbolic. *Nicolas* in Greek means "conqueror of the people" and it's the Greek version of *Balaam*. They say: "There is a lot of duplicates in Revelation, Hebrew and Greek names: Apollyon, Abaddon, Devil, Satan, Yea (the Greek is Nai)". This name, like others—Egypt, Babylon, Sodom—they are symbolic. I think, as you go through this and as you read the comparisons, you'll see that is true. We have to, like what is God is saying here, "We have to hate idolatry, synchronism". If you look at synchronism—trying to take pure religion, pure worship and blending it with other things around, trying to make it all the same. God says that unless you repent the flywheel will stop. The lampstand will be removed. So how do we repent? We read, we act, we think, and can we do. We do that over and over again and create momentum.

"To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life ...". That's what we all want. Let's look at Revelation 2:8.

8) *And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:*

9) *I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.*

10) *Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

11) *'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.'* (NKJV)

We are going to have trials and tribulations. They're guaranteed; we are going to be tested. But one of the things you pick up in this passage is, you'll have tribulation for ten days—it's for a short time, it's not for a long time, there will be an end to that. I remember when I was in the hospital this last time when Samuel was there in ICU for about three weeks and then a regular room for about a week and in the hospital for about a month, that was a big interruption to the day-to-day life. The things that you do to keep your relationship going with God. It was just a huge interruption. I don't know if you've been in the hospital a lot but they don't turn the lights off in there. They're interrupting an awful lot, so it's a really difficult place to be for a long time.

That trial, that tribulation, came to an end—so far, so good. You see the term, “those who say they are Jews and are not”. Those who say they are spiritual Jews; they will say they are a part of the church but they're not. They are tares among the wheat. Trials are coming, but it says don't fear, don't be distracted by that. There's a lot of bad guys out there; there's no doubt there are bad guys. If you look, there is a lot in the Old Testament about the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar. He was a bad guy but God called him His servant. He was on a mission to do whatever God wanted Him to do. If you read Daniel 4—which we aren't right now—that was written by Nebuchadnezzar about the experience of being turned into an animal for seven years and realizing that he wasn't all that. God gave him his power.

If you look at Pharaoh, he worked for God. Can you imagine where Moses goes to Pharaoh and says, “let my people go” and Pharaoh says, “ok”. That wasn't the plan—I have some plagues planned out. What if after the third plague Pharaoh said, “I've had enough, go ahead and go”. Or at the ninth plague? He had ten planned out that ended in the death of the firstborn. Then the children of Israel flee. What would have happened if Pharaoh hadn't changed his mind and gone after them? The whole urgency of crossing the Red Sea—the miracle of the Red Sea—and then the drowning, the annihilation of the enemy army would have never happened. God had it all planned out.

If you read Daniel 11 and match these events that happened over multiple generations, it reads like a play. If you open a commentary and it links it to the historical account, you can see that God had it all planned out hundreds of years in advance. We don't need to

fear, we just need to have faith. God has got that. Yes, there are bad guys and bad things are going to happen but that's God's plan, for those things to happen. Let's look at Revelation 2:12; go to the next church—Pergamos.

Revelation 2:12 *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:*

13) *"I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.*

14) *But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.*

15) *Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*

16) *Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.*

17) *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it. "* (NKJV)

The hidden manna is Christ, His spirit. The sin, the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, the doctrine of Balaam, it's idolatry. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, commits sexual immorality—all through the Old Testament Israel and Judah are pictured as being an unfaithful wife. They are unfaithful—sexual immorality. He says repent or I will come to you quickly.

Something happened to me about a month ago that reminded me of the pull of idolatry. You read the Old Testament and ask, why does Israel keep doing this over and over again? Why does Judah keep doing this? What is the pull of idolatry? It's so stupid. It doesn't make any sense, why do they keep doing it? Out in Florida, Samuel is involved in a school for Down Syndrome kids and one of his friends there, their family is really active in serving the school. They do very well financially and they invited us out to their beach house on the ocean where they have a couple of boats and a really nice place. This is in addition to the big house in the city. They are currently building another house where a whole wing of the house is just for the Down Syndrome son who is going to be with them forever. It was an interesting thing; we went out there and we say "Hi". They have a couple of daughters in addition to their Down Syndrome son and we all go—my daughter is there, my granddaughter is there, Samuel's mom is there and Samuel and I. The boat has 11 people or so on it and it's not crowded. It's a nice boat. The music is going—the purpose of the boat ride was to go to a restaurant that you have to go miles and miles away to get to. So we head out and we're passing these bazillion dollar mansions on the oceanfront and bazillion dollar boats and yachts with half a dozen motors—these huge monstrous things. You look and think, this is pretty nice. You look at the family and they're doing well financially but they are also very, very generous.

They serve everybody in the Down Syndrome community, they put their money and who wouldn't want part of that? Who wouldn't want their own mansion, their own lake front property, their own cruising boat and then a fishing boat too that is decked out like some fishing guide—who wouldn't want all that? They make it look good. They are involved in a false religion that's not Protestant—that all the Protestant's broke away from. But that's the church where they are very active and they make it look so good.

The temptation is, if I want to get some of what they have, I need to do what they did. I need to be like them—they are good people; they have a good family and good stuff. They are really blessed. That is the pull of idolatry. Whenever the children of Israel came into the land and see the people in the land that are following idolatry or synchronism or whatever and they see what they have, they think they want some of that. His crops look good, his barn looks good, his family looks good—I better do what he's doing. Instead of believing God, instead of having faith in God, they start trying to copy. There were warnings. When they went into the land there were warnings that God gave them to not copy them. You're going to have these temptations. So the boat ride—an example of abundance and generosity then becomes a stumbling block, just like Balaam taught Balak to put before the children of Israel, a stumbling block. Lusting—wanting to do and be like others instead of believing Yehovah and wanting to be like Jesus Christ.

Let's look at Revelation 2:18.

18) And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, 'These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:

19) 'I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first.

20) Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

21) And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

22) Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.

23) I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

24) 'Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.

25) But hold fast what you have till I come.

26) And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

27) 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'— as I also have received from My Father;

28) and I will give him the morning star.

29) *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*
(NKJV)

Here we see idolatry, we see a false leader calling herself a prophetess and people following and not repenting. Why would they do that? We’ve seen just from our past in last 20 or 30 years—maybe 40 years—people would often rather follow a strong leader and be part of a herd than to not follow them and suffer isolation. Being separated from the herd because you’re not going to go along with what the herd is doing. The fear of isolation is a real fear—it’s not easy being by yourself, trying to do the right thing when all your peeps are going off in a different direction. We saw that and felt that with Worldwide. Following a false leader.

Jezebel’s sexual immorality, claiming Christian liberty—the whole concept of grace, you don’t have to obey God, you can kind of get away with anything because it’s all covered. The morning star; it says I will give him the morning star. What is the morning star? Revelation 22:16 identifies the morning star as Jesus Christ. We get Christ and His spirit. Also notice that it says, “let him hear what the spirit says to the churches”. It ends every one of these with this, “let him hear what the spirit says to the churches”. None of them say, “Let them hear what the spirit says to this church.” No, listen to what the spirit says to every one of these messages to all the churches because they all apply; they all apply to us.

Let’s look at Revelation 3:1, we’ll move on to the Sardis church.

Revelation 3:1 *“And to the angel of the church in Sardis write,
These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: “I
know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.
2) Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for
I have not found your works perfect before God.
3) Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent.
Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not
know what hour I will come upon you.
4) You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments;
and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.
5) He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out
his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and
before His angels.
6) “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*
(NKJV)

Here you have a church where their flywheel is just barely going. It’s slowing down. The accusation is neglect, not paying attention, not revering the first commandment of putting God first. It says you have a name. Name means reputation, so you have a reputation. You look good on the outside. Let’s turn to Matthew 23:27, Christ is blasting the Pharisees here.

Matthew 23:27 *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.*

28) Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. (NKJV)

This is the thing that the Sardis church was suffering from. They had a name, a reputation, but on the inside, they weren't living up to what they should be. It says "Be watchful." If you check the commentaries, that means "Become watchful", because they weren't watchful. They needed to become watchful. What are they supposed to watch? We are supposed to watch ourselves. Watch what we are thinking and evaluate ourselves. We are not supposed to be imposters. We have to be good on the inside as well on the outside. We have to have our flywheels spinning. This message is not just to the Sardis church, it says "Listen to what the Spirit says to the churches"; this is all the churches, to the seven churches. Let's look at Revelation 3:7.

Revelation 3:7 *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens":*

8) "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

9) Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

10) Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

11) Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

12) He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

13) "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' "
(NKJV)

We can read where it says you have a little strength and think that that's saying that the Philadelphia church was strong, but if you read in the commentaries, it means that you have "but a little strength". It's not saying you are strong; it's saying you have but little strength. It's really saying you are weak instead of you're strong. But, "I set before you an open door", so who set the open door? That was Christ who did that. A synagogue of Satan are false churches, those are the imposters. Spiritual Jews, He says He commands us to persevere. That word *perseverance* is an interesting word to me because when I was a kid and we made the mistake of telling mom, when she would ask us to do something and we said "I can't"—if you've heard a kid say that—she taught

us a poem and every time we said “I can’t”, she made us quote the poem. The poem is called “*Perseverance*” and it says:

*Somebody said that it couldn't be done.
But he, with a chuckle, replied,
That "maybe it couldn't" but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried*

I haven't said “I can't” in a long time so I'm trying to remember it.

*So he buckled right in with a trace of a grin
On his face. If he worried, he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.*

Perseverance—don't give up, don't quit, don't stop, keep going, don't think “I can't”, just keep going.

It says that we will be kept from the hour of trial. I think it's interesting to note that Pentecost precedes Trumpets. So, Pentecost, the wave loaf offering picturing the resurrection of the Firstfruits, precedes Trumpets picturing the kick off of the Day of the Lord. It says that He will keep us from the hour of trial that will come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. So, we have a little strength. We've got false brethren among us. We're supposed to persevere. If we do, we are held from the hour of trial. It says to “Hold fast or lose your crown.” I remember back in the '80's when the Worldwide apostasy was happening, that a friend of mine—Worldwide had gone Protestant—so people were looking for a place to be. This guy told me, “I'm not going anywhere because I'm not going to lose my crown. I'm just going to stay and hang in there”. He, along with a whole lot of other people bought into the whole Protestant myth because they didn't want to lose their crown. That's how they lost their crown; by not sticking to God's word and not obeying and following a false leader. Once again, it says “Hear what the spirit says to the churches”—plural. Revelation 3:14.

*14) And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,
These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the
creation of God:*

*15) "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were
cold or hot.*

*16) So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you
out of My mouth.*

*17) Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of
nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and
naked—*

*18) I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich;
and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness
may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.*

- 19) *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.*
 20) *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*
 21) *To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.*
 22) *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." ' ' "*
 (NKJV)

Poor, blind and naked, unable to assess the true condition of their relationship with Yehovah. Their flywheel is not spinning very well. If you run off the road in your automobile and you run into a concrete barrier, you're going to come to a very quick stop and the flywheel will stop spinning and the engine will stop because you hit the wall. I don't know if you've ever driven in a snowstorm at night. But you can't see a thing. The snow's coming down, the headlights hit it and reflects it all back and you're blind. They are suffering from a broken flywheel. How do you fix a broken flywheel and get it going?

I want to wrap this up with a very familiar story. Turn to Genesis 31:1. This is the story about Jacob. You know Jacob did his brother dirty and had to leave and run off to Laban, married his daughter and the story goes.

- Genesis 31:1** *Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth."*
 2) *And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and indeed it was not favorable toward him as before.*
 3) *Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you." (NKJV)*

Drop to verse 13.

- 13) *I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family." "*
 (NKJV)

Continuing in verse 17) ...

- 17) *Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels.*
 18) *And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained, his acquired livestock which he had gained in Padan Aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan. (NKJV)*

Jacob was told what to do and he hit the road and now he's about doing it. Let's look at verse 22.

- 22) *And Laban was told on the third day that Jacob had fled.*

23) *Then he took his brethren with him and pursued him for seven days journey, and he overtook him in the mountains of Gilead. (NKJV)*

Laban confronted Jacob and they worked things out and in Genesis 32:1 the story continues.

Genesis 32:1 *So Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.
2) When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's camp." And he called the name of that place Mahanaim. [Which means "two camps"]
3) Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. (NKJV)*

Continuing in verse 6) ...

6) *Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him."
7) So Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies. (NKJV)*

The word for *companies* is *mahane*, which is a similar word to *mahanaim*. So he had seen this vision of what he called "two camps" and now he has the idea to split his stuff up into two *mahane*. Verse 9, Jacob begins to pray. Have you ever been in a jam and all you could do was just pray?

9) *Then Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you':
10) I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. [Mahane]
11) Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children.
12) For You said, 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.' (NKJV)*

So Jacob is praying and he's claiming a promise. Let's look at verse 22.

22) *And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, [Benjamin wasn't born yet] and crossed over the ford of Jabbok.
23) He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had.
24) Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.
25) Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.
26) And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!*

27) So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob."

28) And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; [prince with God] for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."

29) Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there.

30) So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

31) Just as he crossed over Peniel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip. (NKJV)

Even when his hip was out of place and he was in great pain, he would not let go. He struggled, he persevered; he wasn't going to let go. Who was this that he was wrestling with? Let's go to Hosea 12:3.

Hosea 12:3 He took his brother by the heel in the womb, And in his strength he struggled with God.

4) Yes, he struggled with the Angel and prevailed; He wept, and sought favor from Him. He found Him in Bethel, And there He spoke to us—(NKJV)

Let's look at John 1:1; who is this?

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (NKJV)

Skip down to verse 14.

14) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (NKJV)

This is the Word of God. Jacob wrestled with the Word of God. He wrestled, he persevered, he wouldn't let go and, in the end, he received a new name. We have to do just what Jacob did. We have the word of God in the book. These are God's words—the word. We have to wrestle with God's word. We have to not let go. We have to persevere, we have to endure pain, it's not always easy. There are distractions, there are trials, tribulation and everything thrown at us possible. We have to hold on and not let go. Just like Jacob. We have to hear, listen, seek. We have to do, take action, think, meditate, evaluate—evaluate ourselves and judge ourselves. Pray, ask for help, express our fears, our concerns, claim promises, keep the flywheel spinning.

When I was a kid, they had these little wooden tops that had a metal bottom and you would wrap the string on the top, throw it out there and unwinding the string, the top would spin and as long as it was spinning, that top was straight up. But when that top would slow down, it would start to wobble and as it slowed, eventually it falls.

A gyroscope is an interesting thing. I played with those. They have a flywheel and you get it spinning and that gyroscope will stay upright. You try to put pressure against it and

it fights the pressure; it wants to stay upright because of the flywheel. As long as it's spinning, it doesn't fall. We need momentum to carry us through trials and tribulation. Let's look at Daniel—I love Daniel—Daniel 9:1.

Daniel 9:1 *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—
2) in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. (NKJV)*

He was reading, studying, trying to understand.

3) Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. (NKJV)

Praying, seeking, taking action, doing. Drop down to verse 13.

13) "As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.

14) Therefore the LORD has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice. (NKJV)

Reading, listening, thinking, evaluating, praying. Verse 19.

19) O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

20) Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,

21) yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

22) And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. (NKJV)

It is not uncommon among God's elect to be praying to God and asking to understand something that we don't understand. Just really seeking to understand that and asking God and while we're praying, all of a sudden, we get it. What we were trying to understand, God answers our prayer right there in the moment and we understand. That is the power of the flywheel. The power of having a close relationship with Yehovah. Read, listen, take action, think, meditate, pray, seek, knock. Momentum is the key to stability. I've heard all my life in the COG, prayer, Bible study, meditation. Those are the three things you have to do. For me, the missing ingredient was taking action and understanding the power and the purpose of a flywheel and momentum. Let's get

our spiritual flywheel spinning while we can. We don't know what trials lie ahead but if we don't have the momentum, if we do not know Yehovah, then we're in danger of falling over by coming to a complete stop. We have to build a very strong relationship with Yehovah to know, to get through—we have to know Him. If we persevere through the struggle, if we hang on to God's word, a new name awaits us. A new name just like Jacob the supplanter became Israel, the prince of God. A new name awaits us.