

“I Can’t Take It Anymore!”

A Contradiction of God’s Word

by Michael Rudolph

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How many of us have, at one time or another said or thought: “I can’t take it anymore?” Such a statement is usually made during a time of pain, frustration, depression, or despair, and eventually the event or the feeling that triggered it resolves itself and we move on. But what does not move on is that, in that moment of verbal abandon, we contradicted God’s Word and have not repented. What do I mean by that? How did we contradict God’s Word? We contradicted Philippians 4:13 which says:

“I can do all things through Messiah who strengthens me.”

By saying “I can’t take it anymore,” we are, in effect, saying: “I cannot do all things through Messiah who strengthens me,” so we are contradicting God.

Well, you say, in Philippians, Paul is talking about his own life and you are taking the Scripture out of context. Okay, let’s look at the context and its intended application. The context begins with verse 9 in Philippians 4 and continues:

“The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Messiah who strengthens me.”

Did verse 9 impact? Paul is telling us:

“The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”

It is only after he says this that he tells us:

“I can do all things through Messiah who strengthens me.”

Paul says something else that bears on this when he says in Romans 8:37:

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

Saying “I can’t take it anymore,” even in a moment of frustration, is the same as saying “I have been conquered, and Messiah’s love for me has failed.” Make no mistake. Saying and even momentarily believing: “I can’t take it anymore” is sin because we are contradicting the Word of

God. Worse, it is unrepentant sin because we typically move on without realizing it is sin, and each time we encounter a similar adverse situation it becomes easier and easier to repeat the sin.

Now this particular sin of contradiction has consequences to ourselves and to those around us. When we utter the words of defeat we are usually angry, distraught, frustrated, depressed, or all of that, and the event that triggered all those emotions may have been severe or it may have been building. Either way, speaking those words says to us and to God, I have a right to flip out or check out. I either want to die, or I intend to leave (and I have a right to leave) the person and the circumstance that is causing me the pain. This may be my husband, my wife, my child, my parent, my friend, or my job. But you know what? I don't have a right to do any of those things, and each time I allow myself to sin by saying so, I am bringing myself a step closer to making them a reality, and doing irreparable harm to myself and others.

Ohev has recently experienced a tragedy where the words "I can't take it anymore" were used. The awful act that occurred is exceedingly rare, but violence that accompanies sinful confessions of desperation are not rare; they show themselves through husbands assaulting wives, wives assaulting husbands, parents abusing children, and depressed individuals attempting or at least contemplating suicide. No one has to teach us the unbiblical nature of these things, for we all know them.

We like to think that communities of believers are exempt from such occurrences, and in some congregational communities there is social pressure to hide problems from one another and from the congregation's leaders. So people spend their time at their synagogue or church with smiles on their faces because it is expected of them; it would be a bad witness, you know, to not look happy – to not look joyful. And the irony of it is that those who are putting on a false face think they are the only ones doing it, and they wish they could be as happy and care-free as everyone else around them who is smiling. That is a deception that, I think, is less prevalent in synagogues, Messianic included – possibly because Jewish history and the Jewish experience is so familiar with tragedy and, therefore, admitting to negative feelings and emotions seems more acceptable.

But they aren't the feelings and emotions that are the problem. It is not an unbiblical negative confession (as some of us have been taught) to tell the truth about how we feel, including when we feel bad. What is sinful and harmful is concluding from those emotions and feelings, anything that Scripture says is not so, and furthermore giving power to the lie by speaking it and acting on it unbiblically. So if you have a bad headache, say so and pray that God relieves it. If you don't get instant relief, take a Tylenol or see a doctor; that's okay. But don't say "I can't take it anymore," because YOU CAN take it, regardless of how bad it is. God said you can take it when he allowed the Scriptures: "*I can do all things through Messiah who strengthens me.*" ([Philippians 4:13](#)) and "*Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*" ([Romans 8:37](#)).

And God also assured us through the mouth of Paul in [1 Corinthians 10:13](#):

“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

Some of us may be confused by why sometimes seemingly disciplined believers around us do wrong things. Is faith faulty? Is Scripture untrustworthy? No, certainly not. People are faulty – believers included – when they give in to following their feelings instead of the Word of God.

2 Corinthians 5:7 teaches *“For we walk by faith, not by sight.”*

The nature of having faith is our trusting God, and taking action on what HE says, rather than relying primarily on our physical senses (such as our eyesight) to tell us what is true. But eyesight is only one of our many physical senses; there are a whole host of sensory feelings that we call emotions, and they are sight as well, in that they purport to give us information about the outside world. We are not supposed to ignore them, but we must realize that they can give us false information, whereas God will not. So, if we are emotion-driven in our actions, and either do not consult God or ignore His Scriptures when what they tell us seem to conflict with what our emotions tell us, we will soon be in big trouble.

But why are we even tempted to fall prey to our feelings and emotions? Why do our feelings and emotions sometimes have such a strong hold on us that we allow them and not God to lead us? I would like to suggest an answer that we may not like to hear. My answer is that many of us have bought into a false idea of what the life of a believer is supposed to be. It is true that Messianic Jewish congregations do not preach a gospel of material prosperity, or teach that once we become born-again in Yeshua all will be peachy cream. I am thankful for that, but we also do not adequately prepare our people to expect suffering (which is a biblical promise), so when suffering does come we are often shocked, confused, and disillusioned. And when we are blessed with times of happiness and plenty (and we are), we erroneously consider them the norm that is due us, so when times of trial come, we are ill-prepared emotionally to deal with them.

Let me show you some very challenging Scriptures:

2 Timothy 2:1-3: *You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Messiah Yeshua. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Yeshua the Messiah.*

2 Timothy 3:10-12: *But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra -- what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Messiah Yeshua will suffer persecution.*

This is not the first time that you have seen these Scriptures, and yet the full impact of them has escaped some of us. The first of the two Scriptures promises Timothy that he must endure hardship, and that the things he has heard Paul say he should teach to others. The second

Scripture promises all of us who desire to live godly lives, that we will suffer persecution as Paul did. I think that many of us shrug that off, thinking or hoping that it was meant only for Timothy and his contemporaries. Among those of us who do not shrug it off, many of us are prepared and even willing for stereotypical persecution that would make us martyrs for the faith. They forget, however, what Ephesians 6:12 says:

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

You see, persecution really doesn't come from men, it comes from the forces of darkness who seek to work through men who either wittingly or unwittingly, allow it. That means it can come from both within and without the body of believers, and even from those who are very close to us such as members of our physical and congregational families. It is not announced as persecution and does not look like classical persecution, but it is persecution nonetheless, because someone who has given himself or herself in to sin is coming against us and tempting us to sin in response. And if the coming against us is relentless, we may forget what Scripture teaches about standing fast and overcoming such attacks, and we may declare in desperation “I can't take it anymore!”

This is not easy, and it is sobering because just before Paul said “... *all who desire to live godly in Messiah Yeshua will suffer persecution,*” (2 Timothy 3:12) he declared elements of his own walk with God that included long suffering, perseverance, persecutions and afflictions. The good news though, is that Paul also says “... *And out of them all the Lord delivered me.*” (2 Timothy 3:11).

In Ephesians 6:13, Paul instructs us how to come against the persecution of spiritual attacks when he says:

“Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

It's very comforting to know we have a defense against spiritual attacks, but we are still going to receive them, and we must endure them until victory comes.

Along similar lines, permit me to share several other Scriptures worthy of being meditated upon:

Romans 8:16-18: *“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

John 15:20: *“Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.”*

Mark 8:34-35: “When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, ‘Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his styros, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.’”

Acts 14:21-22: “And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.’”

Members and friends of Ohev, we cannot ignore these Scriptures and think that we are strong. We cannot buy into the notion that a believer’s life should be pain free when Scripture promises that it will not be. And when God Himself tells us He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able, and that with the temptation He will also make the way of escape, who are we to tell Him “there is no way of escape” and “I can’t take it anymore?”

Declaring that which God says is so is not really so, is a sin because it contradicts God. You have no doubt heard some flakey things said about positive confession from the “name it and claim it” crowd, but here is where positive confession is both biblical and required. If the Bible states something as a fact, we are called, as believers, to believe it, to declare it with our mouths, and to act on it. Not believing it and declaring something different is nothing short of sin so, if we ever find ourselves doing it, we must repent with equal voice as soon as we have come to our senses.

And as for the words “I can’t take it anymore?” Let them from this day forward be words that our spirits refuse to utter because we trust God’s Word, and because we commit ourselves into His hands in all things.