



Every Friday night we do chavurah at our place. Chavurah is the Hebrew word for a fellowship, or tightknit circle of friends. We start with kiddush where we light the Shabbat candles and partake of the fruit of the vine and challah bread, and then have a potluck supper where everyone brings a dish.

After supper someone tells one of the stories from the Scriptures, and we ask five questions and talk about them: 1. What do you like, and what bothers you, about the story? 2. Who would you be, or who can you relate to in the story? 3. What is this story telling you about God and Yeshua of Nazareth? 4. What is this story telling you to do? 5. Who are you going to tell the story to this week?

After talking, we pray, especially praying for people we know to come to Yeshua. Then one of the parents prays for the children, and we finish by singing the Our Father. After that we hang out, the kids play, and sometimes we engage in deeper study and discussion.

I developed this model based on the list in Acts 2:42 of the four activities the early talmidim in Jerusalem devoted themselves to, which in simple words are: eating together, building friendships, learning the stories and teachings of the Master as told by the apostles, and praying together.

We've been gathering this way for about a year and a half now, and it's been working really well for us. It's important to me to devote ourselves to the same activities as the early disciples, and gather in the same context as they did - homes. It's also important to me to gather in a way that's simple enough that anyone could come, say "I could do this!" and start a group at their place the next week. (The viral dynamic.) And it's important to me to have a gathering that includes the children and strengthens families instead of tearing them apart, that creates an environment where parents are encouraged to disciple their children, and yet at the same time leaves room at the end for deeper study and discussion while the children play.

You may be asking, why do we tell stories word of mouth? I'm big on telling the stories of Scripture. Over half the Bible is written as story. The gospels are a

collection of stories that were told word of mouth from one disciple to another for several decades before being written down. Anyone, regardless of their age or religious background, can understand a story. People remember stories, and go on to retell them. I actually did ten talks last year, expanding on these ideas and explaining how to tell the stories of God's word! I also went through the Apostolic writings and listed all the stories there. There are 205 if you combine the parallel accounts in the Gospels. Then I distilled them down to the 104 central stories and categorized them. And starting this Friday night, we're planning on doing one a week for the next two years! I'm so excited about it! :D

AAAND why am I telling you all this.

Because, I want you to start a group at your house. Seriously, please hear me out before you say no. For too long God's people have been programmed to just go to a big church or synagogue and sit there quietly and passively and take, and maybe give a little in terms of time and money. They've been trained to expect people to come to them, instead of going to those people as we're commanded. They've been told to look to religious professionals instead of reaching out and discipling people themselves. They're been lulled into passivity instead of encouraged to take initiative and start things. Listen, you know people that won't go to your church or synagogue - but I'll bet some of them would come to a potluck supper at your house! And if you don't know people like that, then you've been sucked too deep into the religious culture and you need to get out more! Befriend some non-religious people! Because they're all around you.

It's simple. Do a potluck supper. Tell a story. Ask some questions and listen. And maybe pray. Do it every week. And, as you meet people, let them know what you're doing and invite them. It's up to the Holy Spirit from there, right? But at least you're doing your part. I dare you!!!

I'm here to help you, too. If you'd like to use my outline for gatherings, see my list of the stories in the New Testament, or listen to the audios of my storying talks, I put them all in a zipped folder and you can download it free [here](#). Or, [here](#) for a smaller folder without the audios. My one request is, if you start a group or get into telling God's stories, let me know how it goes.

You. Can.



We're reading the first half of Deuteronomy 32 in Torah portion Haazinu for Hebrew Chapters this week. It's poetry, so it's linguistically rich and has an unusual vocabulary. Not to mention being an incredible description of God's relationship with Israel. Watch and share the trailer [here](#), and join me for the whole study [here](#)!

Victor was recruited into the New Age by an undercover Satanist. After an angelic encounter he's Torah observant, studying Hebrew, and going to Israel. Here's his story.



As a kid I was raised in the church. Because grandma dragged everyone, we didn't have a choice. When I was 15 there was an "evangelist" that I met who was extremely gifted in prophecy and healing. This evangelist I found out actually turned out to be a satanist with a plan to recruit me. At the tender and gullible age of 15 he began to instruct me in different eastern religions and practices, especially New Age. I soaked up all the information, and felt like I was special because of the "hidden knowledge" I had that the church folk did not.

For 3 years New Age was my secret, but yet I was left for a longing in my heart for something greater. The climax of that religion was to get to the point where you say "I am that I am, I am God". Well I got to that point, and as much that I called myself God, I couldn't reconcile the fact that I was mere human destined to die, and I had not created anything. At the age of 18 the lies of New Age and the truth of the Bible in me came to all out war. I wanted to believe the truth, but I was confused. All the while I was battling this I was in my first few months of Bible College!

I decided to give God an ultimatum. At 5 o'clock Wednesday morning I told God to reveal Himself to me. I asked him if he were real to send two angels in my room to speak to me about Yeshua. I said this in desperation, arrogance and disbelief. As soon as I said those words I got off of my knees and went back into my room around 5:05. Not even 15 minutes later 2 huge angels came to my room and preached to me the eternal gospel of the Messiah for 5 hours! They first started talking in English, declaring the glories of Yeshua, but then they began to talk in another language I could not mentally comprehend, but I spiritually understood it. When the encounter was over I was overwhelmed with tears and thanksgiving, and I ran to the chapel on campus! I disrupted the gospel choir with shouts of thank you God for saving me, for at least an hour.

From that day on I dedicated my everything to serve Yeshua and his purposes for as long as I live. That was in 2004, and shortly after I endeavored in missions, and since 2010 I made the complete move to live in a 3rd world country for Yeshua to be glorified. Our ministry has seen many miracles, healings, deliverances and salvation all to the glory and honor of God. In 2008 God began to move my heart for Israel, and started me on a path to honor the whole word of God. Now my wife and I are torah observant, and have dedicated our lives to seeing "all Israel saved".

I heard of holylanguage.com by searching online for a messianic ministry that teaches Hebrew, and from good friends in California. I am passionate about learning Hebrew because my family will be moving to Israel in 2015 for full-time ministry, and we desire God to use us to the utmost. Shalom!

You have a story too! And your story is worth telling, because your story glorifies God. Would you be willing to share your story with the other students, too? [Here's how](#).

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I believe in you,

Izzy Avraham

Founder & Director, Holy Language Institute

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