

Yael Eckstein

Foreword by Dr. Pat Robertson  
and Gordon Robertson

# GENERATION ~ TO ~ GENERATION

*Passing on a Legacy of Faith to Our Children*



International Fellowship  
of Christians and Jews

Y A E L E C K S T E I N

FOREWORD BY DR. PAT ROBERTSON  
AND GORDON ROBERTSON

GENERATION  
— TO —  
GENERATION

*Passing on a Legacy of Faith to Our Children*



***Generation to Generation — Passing on a Legacy of Faith to Our Children***

Copyright © 2020 by the International Fellowship of Christians & Jews, Inc.  
All rights reserved.

Unless otherwise noted, all quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible, New International Version®*, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked ESV are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.”

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NASB are taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Cover and interior design by MarketOne Consultants, Fort Worth, Texas

Cover photo image: Shutterstock

Inside cover photo of Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein and Yael Eckstein by Olivier Fitoussi

IFCJ Project Staff: Caleb Burroughs, David Kuner, Yonit Rothchild, and Betsy Schmitt

Published by the International Fellowship of Christians & Jews, Inc. with offices in Canada, Israel, South Korea, and the United States.

ISBN 978-0-9835327-7-4

First Printing: 2020

**ALSO BY AUTHOR**

*Holy Land Reflections:  
A Collection of Inspirational Insights from Israel*

*Spiritual Cooking with Yael*

*With eternal gratitude to God for blessing me with the perfect parents  
who taught me the way I should go.*

# CONTENTS

## FOREWORD

## INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN

## SHABBAT

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN PRIORITIES

## PASSOVER

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN TO SEEK KNOWLEDGE

## SHAVUOT

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN GRATITUDE

## TISHA B'AV

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN HOPE

## HIGH HOLY DAYS

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN FORGIVENESS

## SUKKOT

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN FAITH

## PURIM

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN COURAGE

## TZEDAKAH

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN GENEROSITY

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**



## FOREWORD

*When a young Orthodox Rabbi began his visionary work in 1983 building bridges of understanding between Christians and Jews, it was Dr. Pat Robertson, president of CBN and Regent University, who was one of the first Christian leaders to step forward to embrace Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein's work. Following Rabbi Eckstein's untimely death in 2019, his daughter Yael Eckstein stood at the helm of the organization the Rabbi founded, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, as its new president. And it was Dr. Robertson's son, Gordon Robertson, who stepped forward to offer his support. Father and son. Father and daughter. Each represents a link in the chain of faith that stretches from generation to generation, and extends that legacy of faith beyond the boundaries of time and space for generations to come.*



I was privileged to know and to support an extraordinary man, Yechiel Eckstein. Yechiel was an Orthodox Rabbi who realized that building bridges between Christians and Jews was a worthy center for a lifetime work.

After the horrors of the Holocaust and the refusal of some Christian groups to intervene, there arose in the Jewish community a profound aversion to Christians. Yet in the modern-day evangelical church, there

is a profound love of Israel and Jewish causes.

Yechiel Eckstein saw beyond the prejudices of his day to build a fellowship which has brought tens of millions of dollars in relief to beleaguered Holocaust survivors and needy Jews in Israel and around the world that springs forth from the love which evangelical Christians have for Israel.

The work of the *International Fellowship of Christians and Jews* is indeed profound, and I am delighted that Yechiel's daughter, Yael, is carrying on the work of her father. I know that good things are still to come in his memory and as his legacy.

*Pat Robertson*

*Founder/Chairman*

*The Christian Broadcasting Network, Inc.*



Have you ever wondered why God chose Abraham? Genesis 18:19 gives us the answer: “*For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him*” (NKJV). The “*keeping of the way of the LORD*” is not only the secret to Abraham being chosen; it is also the secret to the survival of Judaism. Even without dwelling in their homeland for more than 2,000 years, the Jewish people have survived. No other nation on earth has retained their culture and their faith for 4,000 years.

God is the God of generations, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and this pattern of generations has been repeated since Abraham to the present day. The faith of our fathers is a legacy that requires each generation to keep the way of the Lord. Within the Jewish family, each generation plays a role in observance in the home, from the youngest asking questions at the *seder*, to the mother lighting candles, to the grandfather and father giving the blessing over the children on the Sabbath. Judaism is not just observed in the synagogue, it is primarily observed in the home, and each member of the family is a participant.

In today's world, we live in a culture that is increasingly intolerant of belief, particularly belief in a Judeo-Christian worldview, and in commandments to obey. For years, I have longed for a book, a manual, that could be used by Christian families to transmit a living faith through the generations even while living in a hostile culture. Yael Eckstein has given us that book.

May you study it, may you adopt it, and more importantly, may you do what is written here. If you do, you will find that as we keep our faith, our faith will in turn keep us.

*Gordon Robertson*

*President and CEO*

*The Christian Broadcasting Network, Inc.*



# INTRODUCTION

*Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power. — PSALM 145:4, NLT*

On February 6, 2019, my life changed forever with one phone call. I had just returned from a family vacation when I received the news that my Abba, my father, Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, had unexpectedly and tragically passed away at age 67. In the blink of an eye, I had lost my father, my mentor, and my role model.

Inspired by my father's work and vision in founding the *International Fellowship of Christians and Jews*, I had decided to follow in his footsteps, dedicating my life, as he had, to bringing Christians and Jews together and helping Jewish people in need in Israel and around the world. Just months earlier, *The Fellowship's* Board of Directors had named me President-elect to take up my father's mantle once he retired in three years. I had been blessed to work alongside my father since 2005, taking in his vision, his direction, and more recently, taking on more of the day-to-day duties of running the organization. However, the plan had always been for him to be by my side, guiding me through the transition. Now, bereft and devastated, I faced an unknown future on unfamiliar terrain.

Yet, in those difficult days following my father's passing, what became increasingly clear to me was that he had been preparing me for

this very moment my entire life. Not only had he begun training me for running the largest nonprofit humanitarian organization in Israel, more importantly, he had been instilling in me from my childhood the foundational values I would need to navigate this world and make it a better place. My father had left me a legacy of faith.

As renowned Christian preacher Billy Graham said, “The greatest legacy one can pass on to one’s children and grandchildren is not money or other material things accumulated in one’s life, but rather a legacy of character and faith.” In Judaism, we refer to this as *l’dor v’dor*, which literally means “from generation to generation.” We pass down our faith to the next generation not just through formal religious training, but through the holy observances, the rituals, and the traditions that happen within the life of the family. I learned the importance of setting priorities and putting God first through the weekly observance of *Shabbat*. I learned the value of asking questions and seeking wisdom as my family gathered around the *seder* table for Passover. Each holiday that we observed throughout the year, and each tradition that we followed — from the *tzedakah* (charity) box we kept in the kitchen to the reciting of blessings before and after every meal — were opportunities for my mother and father to reinforce the fundamental values of hope, gratitude, generosity, courage, faith, and forgiveness. It is these same values that my husband and I are now teaching and passing on to our four children. I know this brought great pride to my father as he watched his grandchildren being raised with those same values and with so much love for God.

When he founded *The Fellowship* in 1983, my father believed that it was this common ground, this commitment to faith and instilling these

fundamental values in our children, that both Christians and Jews shared. He dedicated his life to building bridges of understanding between Christians and Jews. As more and more Christians began exploring the Jewish roots of their faith, he shared with them how the apostle Paul in Romans 11 taught that Christians have been grafted onto the rich olive tree of Israel. It is with his vision in mind that I write this book and invite you to take this journey of faith with me.

In the pages of this book, we will explore holy observances of the Jewish year and the key value it reinforces, through the teachings I learned at my father's feet, and how my husband and I now incorporate those teachings into our own family. In addition, after each chapter, we have provided a section just for you with information on how the observance is mentioned in the Christian Bible, along with questions and Bible stories to discuss with your family, and a selection of Bible verses to memorize that emphasize a key value. My prayer is that you, too, will be inspired and encouraged as you pass on your faith and train your children for lives of godliness.

Finally, this book is a tribute to my father, in deep gratitude for his love and for his legacy. Shortly before he passed away, my father gave me his blessing in preparation for the day I would assume the duties as president. He said to me then, "This is the prayer I've recited over you every Friday night on *Shabbat* since you were born: May the Lord bless you like our mothers Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah. May the Lord bless you and watch over you. May He let His light shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May He lift up His countenance unto you and grant you *shalom*, peace. This is my blessing to you, that your life with your family, with your children, and your calling be filled with love and

meaning.”

These are the words that I have carried in my heart since that darkest day, and which have enabled me to carry on my father’s legacy and pass it on to my own children. Thank you, *Abba*. I love you always.

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Yael Eckstein". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Yael Eckstein *Fellowship* President & CEO





# PURIM

## TEACHING OUR CHILDREN COURAGE

*“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” — JOSHUA 1:9*

“Trust yourself. Create the kind of self that you will be happy to live with all your life. Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny, inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement.”

— *Golda Meir, (1898–1978), fourth Prime Minister of Israel, 1969–1974*

Of all the values I hope to pass down to my children, courage is one of the most important. If our children are to grow up and live the values and teachings that we have passed on to them, they will need a solid foundation of faith and courage in order to choose what is right over what is popular, and to favor what pleases God over what impresses other people. As renowned British statesman Winston Churchill said, “Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities ... because it is the quality which guarantees all others.” In a world that seems to have lost its moral compass, it is imperative that we teach our children how to navigate and follow a faith-based journey through life with courage and determination.

Before the Jewish people became known as the Jews, we were known as the Israelites, and before we were known by that designation, we were known as the Hebrews. The term “Hebrew” was first used to describe Abraham, who was called “Abram Ha’Ivri,” “*Abram the*

*Hebrew*,” in Genesis 14:13. This term is literally translated as “Abraham, who stands on the other side.” Jewish tradition teaches that Abraham earned this name because he stood apart from everyone else in the world at that time. While the culture around him believed in paganism, idolatry, hostility, and competition, Abraham taught about one loving God, morality, justice, and treating one another with kindness. It was a radically different outlook, and it was extremely unpopular.

Yet, all it took was one person who had the courage to speak the truth in spite of popular opinion, and from that flowed the three great faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Tradition teaches that Abraham was so courageous that given the choice to renounce his faith or enter a fiery furnace, Abraham chose the latter. However, God protected Abraham, and he emerged without a single hair singed. In the Christian Bible, it was the courage of men like Peter and John that caught the attention of others and caused the early church to grow (Acts 4:13). The virtue of courage is a cornerstone of both our faiths and remains just as essential today in preserving and growing our faith communities.

Interestingly, the *Talmud* charges parents with the obligation to teach their children how to swim. This requirement demonstrates that parents have a moral and ethical responsibility to teach their children how to remain safe in dangerous situations. It has been suggested that this directive also requires that parents equip their children to deal with difficult situations even when no physical danger is present. The act of swimming demands that a person actively work to stay afloat and fight against the current that is threatening to pull him or her underwater. Likewise in life, we need to learn how to overcome challenges when

they are so difficult that they threaten to “drown” us. We need to be equipped to go against the grain of society when circumstances require it. While it is always easier to “go with the flow,” it is our duty to give our children the ability to swim against the current of society when necessary.

I believe that it is faith that gives us courage, and courage that gives us the confidence to do whatever it is that we are called to do. When Joshua took over the leadership of the Israelites from Moses, God repeated the same phrase to him three times in the first nine verses of the book of Joshua. God said, “*chazak V’amatz*,” “*Be strong and be courageous*” (Joshua 1:6, 7, 9). As Joshua began the daunting task of conquering and settling the land of Israel — as you remember, a task believed impossible by ten of his colleagues when they spied on the land 40 years earlier — he needed courage. However, it was his unwavering faith in God that gave him the ability to act courageously and to know confidently that he would succeed in his mission. When David tasked his son Solomon with building God’s great Holy Temple in Jerusalem, he said, “*Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you*” (1 Chronicles 28:20). It was Daniel’s unwavering faith in God that gave him and his friends the courage to stand against the Babylonian culture. Together, faith and courage have always advanced God’s work on earth.

My *Abba* (father) told me the following story that demonstrates the amazing courage that comes from deep faith. In the beginning of the 20th century, the renowned Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn (1880–1950) was fighting for religious freedom in communist Russia. One

morning as he prayed in synagogue, three men rushed in and arrested the rabbi for his actions. Facing a council of determined men, the rabbi reaffirmed that he would not give up his religious activities. One of the agents pointed a gun at his head and said, “This little toy has made many a man change his mind!” The rabbi replied, “That little toy can only intimidate men with many gods and one world. But I have only one God and two worlds, so I am not impressed by your little toy.”

As my father taught me, “He who fears One, fears none,” or as King David so beautifully wrote, “*I will fear no evil, for you are with me*” (Psalm 23:4).



Courage is born out of faith — faith in God and faith in one’s self, for you were created by God in the image of God. One of my father’s favorite things to do when my sisters and I were young was to read books to us — and not just any books, but books with messages that would inspire us to believe in ourselves. Two bedtime classics in our home were *The Little Engine That Could*, by Watty Piper, and *The Value of Believing in Yourself: The Story of Louis Pasteur*, by Spencer Johnson. For many of us, *The Little Engine That Could* is a childhood staple. The delightful words of Watty Piper introduced me to that intrepid and spunky little blue engine who, in spite of being small and quite ordinary, was able to pull a large cargo over a steep mountain all because she kept repeating, “I think I can, I think I can, I think I can.” *The Value of Believing in Yourself*, about the well-known 19th-century French chemist who discovered the vaccine for the deadly rabies virus,

told of Pasteur's persistent and constant refrain: "I believe I can, I believe I can." The heroes of my bedtime stories were successful in accomplishing things great and small because of the one thing they had in common — both believed in themselves, and consequently had the courage to pursue goals others thought impossible to achieve.

Having this idea reinforced nearly every night provided an indelible message that I could achieve whatever it is that I put my mind to. However, this message was carefully balanced by the idea that I could do nothing without God. Taken together, my father taught my sisters and me the invaluable lesson that with God in our lives, we could do anything. It is a lesson that has served both my sisters and me well over the years.

My parents were well aware that they were raising three girls who would become women in a world that tends to give men the advantage. It was important to them to instill within us the idea that we were just as capable as our male counterparts, and that as women, we have our own unique gifts to contribute to society. They emphasized the morning blessing recited by women daily in Jewish prayer, which thanks God for "making me according to His Will." They taught us that God created us with every tool and talent we would ever need to accomplish His work. My parents filled us with courage and confidence on a daily basis that we could meet any challenge and reach every goal. They helped me believe that anything I would be called to do would be something that I would undoubtedly be able to accomplish. If God brought me to it, God would get me through it. With such knowledge, how can we not have courage?



As a lifelong champion of women, my father felt particularly connected to the holiday of *Purim*, when we celebrate Queen Esther, the heroine who saved the Jews. According to the book of Esther, the Jewish people were destined for annihilation due to the evil machinations of the wicked Haman, but with the help of God working behind the scenes, Queen Esther courageously risked her life to save her people.

Most are probably familiar with this story that takes place after the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem while the Jewish people lived in Persian exile under the rule of King Xerxes. As the story goes, after the king had banished his first wife, he looked for a new wife and chose Esther, a young Jewish orphan. Under the direction of her Uncle Mordecai, Esther did not reveal her Jewish identity. While Esther was queen, an evil man named Haman plotted to kill all the Jewish people, and through a series of well-placed lies and deceptions, was granted permission by the king to do so. Haman drew lots to determine the day that the genocide would take place — the 14th day of the month of *Adar*.

Mordecai informed Esther of the looming threat and instructed her to go before the king and beg for mercy for her people. Esther, however, was hesitant. She knew that anyone who appeared before the king without being summoned would be put to death unless the king favored them. But Mordecai encouraged Esther to do her duty with these stirring words, “*And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?*” (Esther 4:14). Esther accepted the mission, requesting that the nation of Israel fast on her behalf, and ultimately succeeded in saving her people.

Today, *Purim*, which means “lots” in ancient Babylonian and recalls the lots that Haman drew to determine the day of destruction for the Jews, is celebrated on the 14th day of the Hebrew month *Adar*. The day before *Purim* is known as the “Fast of Esther,” and Jews fast in remembrance of the original fast requested by Esther. On *Purim* itself, the book of Esther is read, a feast is held, and the directives of Mordecai and Esther to give gifts to the needy and send food to friends in order to increase camaraderie are fulfilled (Esther 9:20–22). Another prominent custom of the day that has evolved over the years is to dress up in costumes in order to demonstrate that things are not as they seem. While the hand of God is evident throughout the story of Esther, His name is never mentioned in the text itself. On *Purim*, we remember that even though God often seems hidden or disguised in our lives, He is always there.



U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt once said, “Courage is not the absence of fear but rather the assessment that there is something more important than fear.” In the *Purim* story, Esther is a shining example of courage mainly because she was also the victim of intense fear.

For most of the story, Esther was a passive character. She was raised by Mordecai, taken against her will to the palace, forced to marry King Xerxes, and then followed the rules set out by Mordecai regarding her conduct in the palace. When confronted with the task of saving the Jews, her immediate reaction was to reject it, explaining that “*for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being*



*summoned the king has but one law: that they be put to death unless the king extends the gold scepter to them and spares their lives*” (Esther 4:11). Esther, rightfully so, feared for her life.

However, once Mordecai made his case, Esther rose to the occasion and proclaimed, “*And if I perish, I perish*” (Esther 4:16). In that moment, she realized that there was something much larger at stake — the very life and continuity of the entire Jewish nation. This was the turning point for both Esther and the Jews. For the first time, she became assertive, in spite of her fear, and commanded Mordecai to call a three-day fast on her behalf. On the third day, she approached the king. According to Jewish tradition, Esther was so consumed by fear and weak from fasting that it took two angels to hold up her body and one to hold up her head. When she faced the king, her life was spared; however, she did not yet have the courage to make her request.

Instead, Esther invited the king and her enemy, Haman, to a feast where she planned to present her plea to the king once he was in a good mood. However, even with the king’s promise to grant her up to half of the kingdom, Esther postponed her request and invited the pair to yet another feast. Finally, at the second feast, Esther revealed her identity, asked for the salvation of her people, and succeeded in saving the Jews. The 14th day of *Adar*, which was expected to be a day of utter horror for the Jewish nation, became a day of great joy and celebration.

I always found it curious that the Jewish people commemorate the Fast of Esther the day before *Purim*, the 13th of *Adar*, because Scripture tells us that the couriers announced Haman’s evil edict on the 13th day of *Nissan* (Esther 3:12). The Fast of Esther then was held during the middle of *Nissan*, which is actually Passover! The day chosen through

lots to obliterate the Jews was actually 11 months later on the 14th of *Adar*. Moreover, during the time when the terrible decree was declared and Esther succeeded in saving the Jews, there were two fasts — one initiated by the people who reacted to Haman’s initial decree by “*fasting, weeping and wailing*” (Esther 4:3), and the one that Esther called for before approaching the king (Esther 4:16). Why do we only commemorate Esther’s fast?

According to Jewish teachings, while the story of *Purim* is about God’s providence behind the scenes, it is also about the importance of each individual person stepping up with courage to fulfill his or her God-given role. We can only fully appreciate the salvation that took place on *Purim* if we first appreciate the courage it took for one young orphan girl to step out in faith and bravely save her people. Esther’s fast brought about salvation, and her courage laid the groundwork for God to save His people.



When my parents read me all those self-affirming books and taught me to hold Esther as a role model, I had no idea that these teachings would be essential to overcoming the greatest challenge I have ever encountered.

In February 2019, I unexpectedly lost my father. Looking back now it seems that it was divine providence that he passed away on the first day of the month of *Adar* — the Hebrew month in which we celebrate *Purim* and a month in which we are to be joyful. At the time, I noted that it was fitting that my father passed away in the month of *Adar* because

the events commemorated during this month matched his life's work, as he brought so much joy and salvation to the Jewish people. Now I see that *Adar* not only fit my father's life story, but also my own. It was the story of Esther that saw me through those first difficult weeks and months after my loss. I realized during those first months after my father's death that just as God had prepared Esther for "*such a time as this*," He had been preparing me for that very moment.

To me, my father was not only a loving, supportive, and wise parent, he was also my leader and mentor. I had the privilege of working side-by-side with him at the *International Fellowship of Christians and Jews (The Fellowship)* for more than 16 years. Suddenly, he was no longer there, and my world had turned upside down. While my father had begun preparing me to take over leadership at the organization that he founded and built, we both had expected the transition to take place a few years later and with him by my side to guide me. However, with this unexpected turn of events, I became president of *The Fellowship* overnight. I barely had internalized my father's death when I became one of the youngest women to lead any comparable nonprofit organization in the United States.

My father's shoes are enormous ones to fill. Yet, his teachings and guidance have reassured me. I could hear him say, "Perhaps you have reached this position for such a time as this." I drew on the lessons that I learned as a child from my father and mother — that if God had brought me to this position, I absolutely could do it. All I needed to fulfill this role was already within me; I just needed the courage and faith to push forward. God was most certainly with me, just as He had been with Esther and all the other courageous heroes of the Bible.

The year that followed was an incredible journey, and it was one on which I brought my children along with me. They, too, were hurting; they had lost a beloved *saba*, a grandfather, someone who had been such a presence in their young lives. And they, too, had to deal with the reality of me taking on a more demanding position outside the home.

We started a tradition that we upheld throughout the year following my father's death. Every Sabbath eve as I lit the traditional *Shabbat* candles, we lit a commemoration candle in memory of my *Abba* and their *Saba*, which lasted all week long until the next Sabbath. When we lit that candle, we would share a memory about my father and their grandfather, and encourage each other through our loss. It was during this time that I shared with my children my thoughts and feelings about, literally, sitting in my father's chair and taking over his position. I would share the many challenges that I faced each week, and how the lessons I learned from my father helped me through. I shared how my faith was strengthened as I felt God's presence and love with every difficult step I took.

Perhaps more than any teaching, watching me go through this challenge and mustering the courage to go forward taught my children the value of faith-based courage. What was at first scary, unknown, and intimidating became familiar and even a great source of joy in our home as we witnessed *The Fellowship* not only continue to function, but also to grow in the months after my father's death.

As much as I pray that my children encounter as little sadness and struggle in their lives as possible, I know that God sends all of us challenges — challenges tailored to our innate abilities, weaknesses, and life purpose. I believe that the amount of courage we bring with us when

we are met with such challenges will greatly determine our ability to surmount them, or God forbid, to give up in despair. By sharing my experiences with my children, I hope that if they ever question their ability to fulfill God's plan for their lives, they will look back on their mother, just as I looked back to Esther, my ancestor, and know that if she can do it, so can they. They will know that while God gives us burdens, He will bring them through it if they, like Joshua, are "*to be strong and be courageous.*"

## ***PURIM* IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

*Purim* is not mentioned in the New Testament, as might be expected since it is not one of the three pilgrimage holy days that required the Israelites to go to Jerusalem. Rather, *Purim* was observed locally. Some biblical scholars believe the feast mentioned in John 5:1 — “*Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals*” — is referring to *Purim* because it is not named and because of the timing. However, others dispute that because of Jesus’ presence in Jerusalem, signifying it might have been a pilgrimage holiday. Regardless, the courage of an Esther can be found throughout the pages of the New Testament — in a young woman from Nazareth obediently bearing a child out-of-wedlock (Luke 1:26–38); the women who went to the cross, while the other disciples fled in fear (John 19:25); to Peter and John defying the religious leaders to preach about Jesus (Acts 5:17–41).

## FAMILY TIME — TEACHING OUR CHILDREN TO BE COURAGEOUS

1. As a family, share a time when you had to decide whether to speak out against the popular opinion or go along with the crowd. What did you decide? How did you feel about making that decision? What was the outcome?
2. Read the story of Peter and John in Acts 4:12–31. What were they risking by speaking out? What was their response to the religious leaders? What did the believers pray for in vv.24–30? What do these stories teach us about courage and faith?
3. Christian theologian and preacher Billy Graham once wrote, “Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are often stiffened.” Discuss where you have witnessed this. How might you put courage into practice daily?

### *For Parents*

Yael wrote, “The heroes of my bedtime stories were successful in accomplishing things great and small because of the one thing they had in common — both believed in themselves, and consequently had the courage to pursue goals others thought impossible to achieve.” Consider selecting books about courageous heroes to read with your children.

## MEMORY VERSES

Select one of the verses below on courage for you and your family to memorize.

*“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” — JOSHUA 1:9*

*Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD. —  
PSALM 31:24*

*So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. — ISAIAH 41:10*

*Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. — 1 CORINTHIANS 16:13*

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. —  
EPHESIANS 6:10*



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Yael Eckstein is President and CEO of the *International Fellowship of Christians and Jews*, the largest charitable organization in Israel and the largest Christian-supported humanitarian organization helping Israel and the Jewish people. *The Fellowship* raises more than \$127 million annually, helping 1.5 million Jews in need in Israel and around the world.

Yael leads all ministry programs and serves as the international envoy and on-air advocate, giving her the rare distinction of being a

woman leading one of the world's largest religious charities. She recently was named by a leading Jewish publication as one of the "top 100 individuals who have positively influenced Jewish life" for her work as "the world's leading Jewish interfaith activist."

Prior to her present duties, Yael served as Global Executive Vice President, Senior Vice President, and Director of Program Development and Ministry Outreach. Yael was trained for leadership for over 16 years by her father, Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, who founded *The Fellowship* in 1983 by reaching out to Christians and building bridges of trust and mutual effort based on their shared love of the Bible and support for Israel and the Jewish people.

Yael's writings have appeared in a variety of respected publications, including *The Jerusalem Post*, *Fox News*, *The Christian Post*, and *The Times of Israel*. She is the author of two books: *Holy Land Reflections: A Collection of Inspirational Insights from Israel*, and *Spiritual Cooking with Yael*. In addition, her insights into life in Israel, the Jewish faith, and Jewish-Christian relations can be heard on *The Fellowship's* radio program *Holy Land Moments*, which airs five times a week on nearly 1,000 stations in the U.S., Canada, and beyond.

Born in Chicago and now a proud citizen of Israel, Yael and her husband, Amichai, are the proud parents of Meyora, Liam, Sapir, and Shimmy, to whom they are imparting the legacy of faith.



---

---

*“The greatest legacy one can pass on to one’s children and grandchildren is not money or other material things accumulated in one’s life, but rather a legacy of character and faith.” — Billy Graham*

---

---

In Hebrew, the expression for this is *l’dor v’dor*, which literally means “from generation to generation.” In Judaism, faith is passed down from one generation to the next primarily through the holy observances, rituals, and traditions that happen within the life of the family.

Through the weekly observance of the Sabbath, Jewish children learn the importance of setting priorities and putting God first. As the family gathers around the *seder* table for Passover, children learn the value of asking questions and seeking wisdom.

Each holiday observed, and each tradition followed are opportunities to reinforce the fundamental values of faith. *Generation to Generation* unlocks these holy observances and traditions and reveals the key values they reinforce.

Each chapter also includes a special bonus section containing:

- Insight on how the observance is mentioned in the Christian Bible
- Questions and Bible stories to discuss with your family
- Bible verses to memorize that reinforce key values

These are the values and rituals that Yael Eckstein learned from her father, that she and her husband are now passing on to their four children, and that will allow you to pass on a strong and living faith to *your* children and grandchildren.