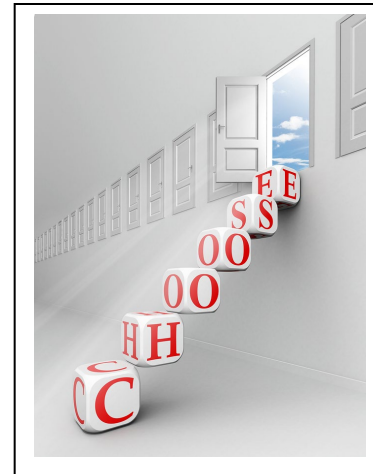




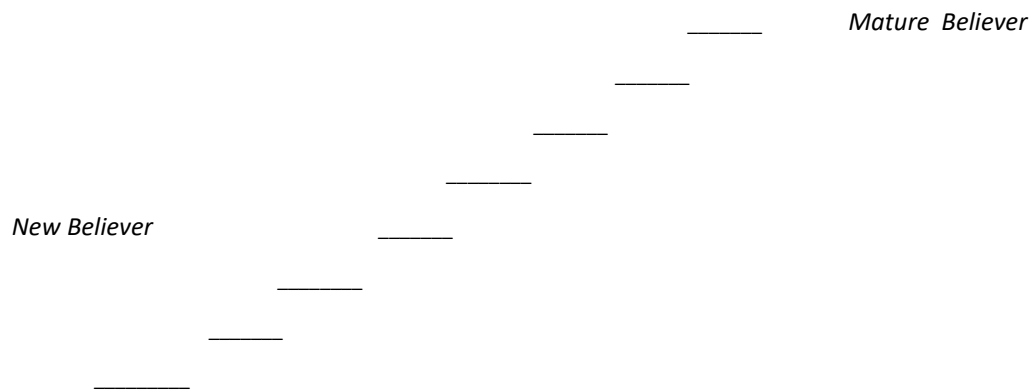
From Faith to Faith: Romans 1:16-17

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For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. **For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith:** as it is written, The just shall live by faith. Romans 1:16-17 KJV

¹⁶ I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation [from His wrath and punishment] to everyone who believes [in Christ as Savior], to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ **For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed, both springing from faith and leading to faith [disclosed in a way that awakens more faith].** As it is written *and* forever remains written, “THE JUST *and* UPRIGHT SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.” AMP



Sea Yam The Sea of Unbelief “In the soup”

The phrase “*from faith to faith*” caught my attention some years back. I wondered what it might mean. After some word study and exploration of commentaries, a picture began to form for me. The Amplified Bible probably said it best: “*both springing from faith and leading to faith [disclosed in a way that awakens more faith]*” I began to see a stairway of our faith development, with each step having been attained through an expression of faith and confidence in Messiah and thus being a springboard leading to the next step of maturing faith.

Recently, as we went through this picture at our Sukkoth gathering, the number of steps came into discussion. I hadn’t specifically considered a number of steps, though I know there are a number of ways to consider the stages of a growing faith per previous study. Eight steps might be considered, with the Scriptural understanding of eight as representing a new beginning. The Thirteen Steps of *kavanah* were also suggested as a possibility. (These steps cover a Hebraic viewpoint of the basis from which one would pray. They start from a zero position, where words may be spoken in prayer but with no belief; through various stages of praying with the understanding that there MIGHT be a god who hears, there IS a god who hears who might hear me, and onward until in the final stages, there is a deep confidence that prayer is heard coupled with a deep, groaning, and supplication for His ear, believing that He exists and will respond.) The comment was made that one pictured very many, shallow steps because they viewed themselves as moving very slowly!

As I considered moving “from faith to faith” I considered where and how it might start. I began to see a picture of a sea in which people flounder around through life without faith. ***Yam*** is the Hebrew word for sea, and has connotations of both confusion or chaos and people or nations. I didn’t know this when I first considered this picture. You might say they are “in the soup.”

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:8-10 KJV

Our Elohim seeks us out and draws us to Himself out of the sea of unbelief and confusion. It is bad enough under “normal” times but oh, so much worse in the days we are living now! How thankful we are for already having a foothold on faith, and how concerned we are for those who are just now beginning to see their need!

The first step out of the soup is onto the first step of faith. The righteousness of our God is revealed through our Messiah’s work on our behalf, somehow made personal for each, and starting us onto the way of disclosing Himself in a way that awakens more faith. I see that this gift of our God is also relational. Over time, He walks with us through all the circumstances of our lives, and as we grow more confident of Him, and receive what He offers, our faith leads to increased faith. It is not “faith given” on the proverbial silver platter, but worked out in and through our lives as we walk with Him. Truth be told, we often find that it grows more in difficult times than in times of ease. How awesome if we could learn early on to simply trust and keep moving straight up!

Unfortunately, for many of us, at the next sign of trouble, rather than standing firm on the faith that our God will answer our need, we fall or JUMP back into the sea of unbelief. We wait for Him to prove Himself to us once again. When He graciously does so, we move back to the first step. How many times do we go through this, waiting for Him to prove Himself again, before we can STAND firmly in faith and confidence that since He responded before, He will again? Each of us who has been on this walk knows! Sometimes, we have even progressed several steps upward in faith, but when a particularly challenging event occurs, we may fall or jump all the way back down to the soup once again.

Sometimes, we may stay on a step for a long time, while we are waiting for His action. This isn't an unbelief and may be a testing of some sort along the way.

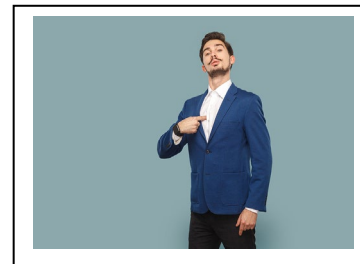
There seem to be at least two ways to illustrate this sanctification process using the stair way metaphor.

Our View

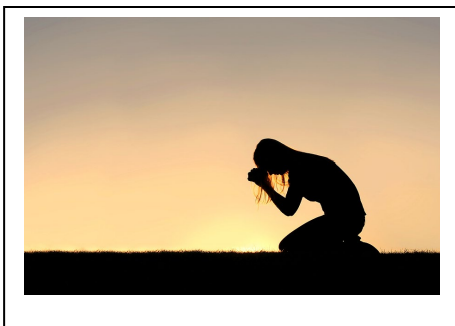
We see the different struggles we have going from faith to faith. Walking, falling backwards to a lower level, carrying a burden we need exposed and released, sometimes crawling because it seems so hard, until we reach Him, but needing always to keep our eyes fixed on the goal in faith, Messiah! This is a good physical picture of how it looks to us as we struggle to overcome all, and we certainly do want to celebrate as we see we are doing better! Yet, there are also times that this focus is more about celebrating our own achievement, thinking it is our own victory. Maybe, congratulating ourselves for having held on, and still moving forward as we view it. Yay! I made it!! I have overcome! We may want to take credit for our perseverance!

YHWH's View

It seems to me that the spiritual posture of the New Believer and the Mature Believer can be depicted here, too. Near the sea of unbelief and the first steps of faith, we are in our own spotlight; perhaps standing, hands on hips, looking up to



Him: I believe in You, but You have to understand that I have things going on in my life and I can't take as much time to be with You as You seem to ask of me. Through the trials of sanctification, because that is what going from faith to faith represents, we experience sorrow and joy, and learn of His faithfulness, and our weaknesses and faithlessness. Gradually, we realize that it isn't our strength that sustains us, but His. The breaking of the outer man, as Watchman Nee called it. As we are nearer to the mature spectrum of faith, the typical posture is more likely one of kneeling and bowing low, saying Your will not mine. I yield to You alone.



This image of “faith to faith” helps to convey the spiritual picture of change from self-sufficiency to humility which causes us to succeed by becoming more humble as we mature. We see the visual impact of being mature, coupled with the humility of yielding to Him... a drastic change from the self-sufficient standing one in the early stages, but not what humans often want to see. It doesn't tickle ears.

It is really not our personal victory, but Yah's victory, in that through our experiences, He demonstrates that He alone is sufficient, and as we grow in faith, we experience Him and come more and more fully to yield, realizing that in ourselves we can do nothing.

The way up is down.

Humble yourself in the sight of the LORD and HE will lift you up.

and as I wrote below...the WORD says faith is a gift from Yah, NOT the result of our working ourselves up to it.

Wcan't just drum up faith within ourselves by trying harder...It is a gift of Yah that none should boast. So we need to be humbling ourselves and asking Him for the gift of faith, an overcoming faith.....and He gives us that gift through being in relationship with Him....working it out through the circumstances of our lives, allowing us to experience His Presence and work on our behalf, so that we can experience the realization of Truth in Him, and that experience is what allows us to stand in faith, disclosed in such a way as to lead to more faith.

s we are going through this very deeply disturbing and challenging time in our lives, where are we on these steps of faith? Very bad things have happened and will likely continue to happen. We may or may not have yet another reprieve. Do we turn and jump back into unbelief, and wait for our Abba to prove Himself to us once again? Do we have such a track record with Him that we can remain where we are, no matter what we see happening around us? But as the Word describes what is coming upon us as we near the time of Messiah's return, the things that go on will worsen, beyond what has ever happened before. Daniel wrote that even the set apart people will be shattered and it will appear as though evil has won. It isn't an easy time for anyone to grow in their faith. Under persecution, the body of Believers typically grows. Under genocide or utter destruction it does not. The conditions described in the Word seem to my eyes to be closer to that of genocide.

Will we stand firm on our steps of faith in the midst of horrible oppression and annihilation? If we are not sure, what do we need to do to more firmly establish ourselves in faith and confidence in Messiah's work on our behalf.

Having done all, will we stand?