



PROSE FICTION PASSAGE I

When I was a young man, I sought the wisdom of an older, humble man named Eliab. Eliab was a middle-aged, quiet servant of the Lord, known for his deep faith and gentle guidance. Though his outward appearance was that of a simple shepherd—rough hands, a weathered face, and a modest demeanor—Eliab held a mysterious wisdom within him that grew more evident as I spent time with him. He was like the still waters of a quiet stream: peaceful, yet infinitely deep, a source of tranquility and yet full of mysteries.

Every Sabbath after the evening prayer, I would journey to Eliab's small dwelling on the edge of the village. He would sit with me by the fire, teaching me the ways of the Lord, not just through words but through actions. He taught me the scriptures in their many forms: the psalms of David, the prophecies of Isaiah, and the wisdom of Proverbs. He showed me how to meditate on the word, not with haste but with patience and reverence.

At first, I learned slowly, stumbling through the verses and struggling to grasp their meaning. Each lesson was like a seed planted in my heart, but often I would grow distracted by the world. My faith was like the soil that needed tending, but I was too eager to move forward before my roots could take hold. I never truly understood why I was so drawn to these lessons. I was eager to learn, yet my desire to fully embrace the teachings often faltered. I would show up week after week, ready to hear something new, but the deeper teachings remained just out of my grasp. I would leave, my heart filled with good intentions, but the lessons soon faded into the background of my life.

Eliab, however, knew my heart. He could see through the outward expressions of devotion. He understood that while I was present, my mind was often elsewhere. He patiently taught, but as I demonstrated my “progress,” his countenance grew solemn. He could see I was not truly seeking to grow and he tried to walk a thin line between encouragement and admonishment. I would tell him how I struggled with understanding a passage, but my efforts to learn felt superficial, like a shallow prayer that did not reach beyond the surface. Eliab, in his wisdom, began to speak less and less, his silence growing more profound. “You must seek the Lord with all your heart,” he would say, quoting from Jeremiah 29:13. “For if you seek me, you will find me.”



PROSE FICTION PASSAGE I

One day, Eliab told me he could no longer guide me further. His words were simple, but heavy. "You have received the word," he said. "You must now walk in it." At first, I was confused and dismayed. "But I have not yet learned everything!" I protested. "There is still so much more I need to know!"

"You have the word," he replied, quoting Isaiah 55:11, "So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."

With those words, he sent me away. In my heart, I felt like a child abandoned. I was not prepared for him to send me off on my own. I had expected more—more lessons, more guidance. But Eliab knew I was not ready to receive more. I had not yet learned to dig deep into the word or to truly live by it. I was like the seed on rocky ground, unable to bear fruit because I did not let the word take root in me.

Years later, I found myself teaching the younger generation in the same way that Eliab had taught me. I would share the scriptures, quoting passages and offering wisdom using old notes that Eliab had given me. However, I noticed something troubling. The young ones, eager for more, would forget the lessons quickly. They would ask for more and more, not realizing that the lessons already given needed to be lived out. Frustrated, I would give them verse after verse, but their hearts were not open to receive. They wanted the next lesson, the next teaching, without grasping the foundation.

One day, I realized that I had become like the students I once taught: always seeking the next thing without fully embracing what had already been given. I had been like the person who listens to the word but does not apply it, as Jesus spoke in Matthew 7:24-27 about the wise man who builds his house on the rock. Had I continued to press forward without understanding the foundational teachings, I too would have found myself lost in the storm.



PROSE FICTION PASSAGE I

I then understood Eliab's wisdom: sometimes, we must be left alone to meditate on what we have learned. The lessons must be internalized, not merely collected. As the psalmist says in Psalm 119:11, "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." The process of learning, true learning, is not just about receiving knowledge—it is about letting that knowledge take root, allowing it to change our lives.

Eliab had not abandoned me; he had set me free. Free to walk in the word I had received, free to seek the Lord on my own. And it was in that freedom, after much struggle and patience, that I began to see the fruits of the lessons he had imparted to me. In the end, I realized that Eliab had been a true teacher, not because of all he had given me, but because he knew when to step back and let me discover the depths of wisdom for myself.