

## The Body

Happy Sabbath to all.

This is a very blessed Sabbath for me, and for a number of reasons. The past few days I have been dealing with a number of temptations, and thoughts, and learning to process them better than I have in the past.

As a result, I have been brought to a number of true thoughts, and I wanted to share these with you in a very simple, but hopefully very inspiring, study. This week, and these days in general, the people of Yah seem to have many causes for sorrow. There are temptations to distraction, to discouragement, on every side, and for us it is truly a bit of a time of trouble. But in all this darkness, in all this trouble, Yah gives us comfort through His Holy Spirit, and messages of hope.

Often, when I am writing these Sabbath studies, Yah gives me an idea, and with it usually comes a name that sort of captures the “point” of the message that I am presenting. This week, for the first time that I can remember, it seems like there are a number of names that are equally applicable, and as a result, I almost gave this week’s topic any of the following names:

“Standing at The Door and Knocking,” “Encouragement,” “Personal Evangelism,” “Tell A Friend,” “The Body Coming Back To Life,” “Teamwork,” and a couple of others. I decided to go with the simplest of the possibilities, and just call it, “The Body,” because ultimately, the whole matter before us is one of the Body to which we have been called. But as I go through the study, I want you to think about these potential titles, and see how they fit in.

Earlier today, Giselle and I had a sort of mini “brainstorming” session, thinking about new ministry ideas, and I can tell you, brethren, it felt very exciting. The Bible study series I am working on, “Answers from Heaven,” I feel very energized to work on that, even more than I was before. Some of that is due to the feedback I have already received from those of you who responded to my initial document of explanation and introduction. I am excited to reach out online, as we have all been encouraged to do, and tell others about my faith, and the joy of believing as I do.

And I can tell you, each of us needs also to find their place in the Body, so that we will have personal (not independent, but personal) ministries. There are some obstacles to this, that I will discuss, and that we must have cleared up, in order to effectively work as The Body of Christ, to work as a divine team, as a unified nation of kings and priests.

The first of these is a kind of “dependency.” This may sound kind of strange, since one of our most pressing concerns recently has been for more frequent communication, particularly since most of us have been separated by great distances. And yet despite this, there is a danger of expecting one person, or a few people, to “run the show.” The CSDA Church has one Leader, and that is Christ. In the past, we have had one visible apostle, and that is Pastor “Chick,” who has been responsible for introducing many of us here to the message we now proclaim.

And yet, we as a people have been called to grow beyond the expectations that may arise from this. We may have a few teachers in Christ, as it is written, but we must ALL consider ourselves to be teachers in Christ to each other, and to the world. A number of our studies recently have been about how to “see”

ourselves, and how to let Yahshua tell us who we are. I pray that we are taking these messages seriously, because each of us has a role that we are called to play as the last scenes of earthly history unfold.

So, if there is a temptation to dependency, then how do we overcome this obstacle?

It is clear that we must pray for, and then share, our ideas for reaching out to others. I do not say we must all come up with an idea and go off on our own direction. We are a people of unity, the unity of having a common faith, and the same Spirit within us. But if we have an idea, let us share it with one another, and then go forth with the blessing and smile of our Father, to see what we may accomplish.

What is it that Satan may use to prevent us from applying this solution? He may tempt you with diverse thoughts, “You will be rebuked for having a useless idea.” “This plan will never work out.” “What you are suggesting will be too difficult to actually do.”

If we submit to these thoughts, then the Church will remain devoid of the wonderful opportunities for evangelism we might otherwise have had. Because of the lack of sharing, we would lose the opportunity to converse with each other about important, interesting, and worthwhile subjects. As you should plainly see, all of the reasons that Satan tries to get us to believe, reasons not to speak, are fear of something. If we fear to speak in the Church, then how can we speak in the world. Here we are loved, and accepted. There, we are largely ignored, and if we are not ignored, we may be persecuted or repelled (sometimes physically).

If any such temptations have bothered you, preventing your words, then put them away, so that we may have the blessing of your input, that the Body should depend on Christ in US, not Christ merely in one or two.

So, we are looking at obstacles, solutions, and temptations, with regard to a Church not acting as a unified Body, to the extent that Yah would have us do. The first of these, as I stated, is a sense of dependency, to sit back and observe as others develop plans. We must feel personally responsible for the spread of the Gospel message, and then we will see our path before us, and if your motive is truly love for your brethren, and love for your fellow man, then Yah will give wisdom to your speech.

The second obstacle is the thought, “Who will do the work?” Admittedly, we are few, and scattered. But this should not prevent us from bringing ideas forth for work to do in the harvest. If an idea is given by Yah, there will be given with it sufficient resources – including people – to accomplish it. Now, this does not mean, again, that we sit back and see. We must take responsibility for the ideas that we have, and bring them forth.

For example, just because, “Brother David is a writer,” this does not mean that you cannot write a Bible study, or put together a tract to share with your neighbors. I can proofread it for you, if you would like... but nothing should prevent you from writing down your experiences, your testimony, for others to know. And that is just one example. There are many that could be named.

And what are the temptations? I can tell you the things that I have heard in the past (both in the Bible, and during the course of this ministry). I have heard, “I am not a good writer/speaker.” I have heard, “I don’t have the skill to do that.” I have heard, “I think (this or that person) would do a better job.” Of

course, we can ask for help, for advice, and so on. But again, just as with the first obstacle, the way to avoid these temptations is to deny them, to see that they are not true, and to step forward in faith.

The third obstacle, an obvious one, is communication – there is a need for more of it, as we have discussed before. Clearly, communication plays an important role in overcoming the other two, previous obstacles that I have mentioned. When we remove the temptations of fear, thoughts of inadequacy, and so on, then no barrier remains for us to have to overcome in our communication with one another. The Body is vital when its blood flows, and in this case its “blood,” the thing that connects its members together, consists of the ideas, thoughts, prayers, and so on that pass between us.

I can say that one of our best communicators lately has been Sis. Daphna. Her emails have been a source of blessing for me to read. I believe that she is gathering strength, and when Yah calls her again to do something, she will have the confidence to do it.

The rest of us should take an example from this experience that our sister has endured. It is true that we are far apart, and our burdens may be less obvious than if we lived near to one another. But surely, the Spirit of Yah knows the state of His people. The value of a single letter of encouragement, received at the right time, is hard to overstate. It can be a source of life to the one who reads it. And I am not talking about sympathy for the sake of sympathy. A letter that just says, “I am sorry you are not feeling well,” or something to that effect, is less valuable than one that speaks of victory over illness, that speaks of the promises of Yah for our healing.

In another way, communication is not valuable if what is being communicated is not being understood.

If a member says something you do not understand, whether it is me during a study or email, or pastor in something he has written, or something that Bro. Luke posts on the forum, then you must feel it is your obligation, a necessity, to let us know, so you can understand. There are still some “gaps” in the understanding of our members and friends, and Yah is eager to fill them. And this is not just about doctrine or theology, there are also practical aspects of faith that can be missed, if (because of complacency or some other reason) you do not say, “Can you please explain what this means?”

Of course, questions and comments are not only permissible at the end of our weekly studies. I enjoy replying to questions, whether it is by our members, or those who are just finding the Church, and I will speak more about that shortly. But you should feel it is your positive responsibility to learn all you can, as often as you can, about the present truth, and asking questions when uncertainties arise is vital to this process. Even if the answer is, “Yah will reveal it to you as you pray,” that is a truth, an answer on which you can depend... and we will have communicated about it. The Body remains vital.

Without it, and we know of actual, unfortunate, instances of this happening, individuals grow distant, misunderstandings occur, and separation results.

Now, I mentioned earlier that this past week has been one of self-reflection for me. As I have prayed, it was shown to me, as before, that I am a prophet of Yahweh. This is something that the Church has generally agreed upon, but it is not something I have said often of myself. However, if I am to truly accomplish what I have been called to do, it is something that I cannot diminish. I say it with humility. I say it with, in the flesh, “fear and trembling.” This statement does not mean that I do not need the

experiences of the Body for sanctification, to learn from those around me, and the experiences that I go through.

Communication from my brethren is as important for me as any other member, and this is why, in this study, I wish to impress upon you the need for us to work as a united, communicative body, as a divine team, each bringing our gifts forth to be counted.

For example, one relevant aspect of the gifts that Yah has given me is the knowledge of answers to spiritual questions. Even if I have not read it in an SDA commentary, or seen it written in a Spirit of Prophecy book, I can give you an answer that will be in line with the character of Christ. Now, some questions are not answered in a simple way, and I do not say I immediately know all things, nor am I saying that I am infallible. But, I am also not alone. I have my brethren.

If I do not know an answer immediately, I have brethren that I counsel with, and we come up with the truth. Let me give you an example.

A few years ago, during a feast, we were wrestling with a problem that had arisen with regard to the Advent message. It was asked of us (I do not recall the source) how the SDA message aligned with this verse from the Book of Hebrews: “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, [Yahshua] entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” (Heb 9:12)

Now, that seems to present a problem for Adventists, because we teach that Christ entered into “the holy place” (that word in Hebrews is actually the term for the Most Holy place within the temple, and behind the veil) in 1844 to begin a cleansing process that culminates in His return just after the close of Probation.

How do we reconcile this with the statement in Hebrews that Yahshua entered into the most holy place “once” at the time of His ascension to Heaven, when His ministry began?

Well, I did not know the answer immediately. So, the Church counseled together. The SDA Commentary did not offer a satisfactory explanation. Other Adventist commentators did not seem to say much on the subject. Finally, we went back to the Old Testament, where Yahshua’s ministry as High Priest was foreshadowed by Moses and Aaron. These brothers had both borne an aspect of Christ’s priesthood, with Moses taking on the leadership and administrative roles, while Aaron dealt with the ritualistic aspects of the symbols.

We found a passage in Exodus 29, which marked the preparation of the tabernacle for the priests’ ministry to begin, that involved Moses taking the blood of both goats and cattle, and using that blood to consecrate the structure to Yahweh for the work of the priesthood. Even though there were many priests after Aaron, and the High Priests entered in annually, this initial consecration process only took place “once.”

Herein, we found the answer, showing that the SDA sanctuary doctrine is, indeed, in line with the Biblical writings. Yahshua, when He rose to Heaven, began His ministry by offering His blood for us as a way of consecrating the sanctuary in Heaven for the remaining portions of the plan of redemption. However, this was not the last or only time He did so. In Hebrews 7:25, we are told that Christ “ever liveth” to make intercession for His people. The sacrifice was offered once, but the intercession that followed, based on

the blood of that unique sacrifice, was involved in a process, as more were converted under the ministry of His apostles, continuing down until this day. Thereafter, in 1844 (as the High Priest did once a year in symbol) Yahshua entered in to complete the tasks of judgment and salvation.

This is just by way of example of finding the answer to an apparently “complicated” question... by using our gifts together. Yah will not leave His people without wisdom, and without understanding, if we will do this in His name.

But what if the question had not been asked at all? Even if we have the answers that Yah wishes to give mankind, if the Body does not bring these to light, and that by communication, we will not benefit from those things He wishes to show us.

We must take responsibility for communicating with others, including ourselves, and whatsoever personal ministry that Yah has called you to do, a part of your ministry, is to bring people to the Body so that they can see the royal priesthood, so they can ask those questions and receive, as it were, “Answers from Heaven.” In this, we may work in the ways that we are called, but all toward the same goal.

I have seen the movements of the Spirit of Yah, and even taking into account recent events, with their potential for temptations to discouragement, let us say, “We will pull together, even in the face of potential tragedy.” Let us say, “We will not fail or be discouraged.” Let us say, “Even if others forsake us, we will endure to the end.” Let us speak to one another, encourage one another, draw warmth from the coldness of others, and let us be the solution that we may have been waiting for, to figure out, or to speak. Do you see a brother in pain, or a sister under a heavy load? We know what the Scriptures tell us to do. We are to be an encouragement, a blessing, to one another. And certainly none of us is above the need for encouragement.

Yahshua received the comfort of angels when He was on earth, and especially near the end. This was not something that took place merely for our information. It was no mere show, but He had need of these things, limited as He was by His walk in human flesh. And what, then, of us? Let us be angels for one another, brethren. Let us encourage and bless one another as Yah would have us do.

You can all be like unto the prophets of Yahweh. You can all be the heroes of faith in this last generation, but you must decide that this is who you are. You must lay aside the distractions and the temptations that keep you from confronting your true self as you are in Yahshua. You must overcome the obstacles that I have mentioned, denying those temptations that come along with them, and see the solutions coming to life. And if this seems difficult, or even impossible, Satan will surely tell you that it is. He will attempt to keep things hidden from you, and what he cannot hide, he will attempt to justify, or even cast as a virtue. But we know the promises of Yah. If you pray for wisdom, with a willing heart, the truth of these things will be revealed to you. Let this truth, let these promises from our Father, be an encouragement to you, and also a call to come up to a higher place, so that this Body will be lively, active, and effective, enduring even unto the end.

Are there any questions or comments on these things?