

Boldness in the Day

Happy Sabbath to everyone.

Ask Bro. Luke has said, we thank our Father in Heaven for another week that has passed, and for this time of rest that He has given to us, to gather in His Name and offer our praise and thanksgiving. We open our hearts and minds, listening for the voice of His Spirit as He guides us in the performance of His perfect will.

This week, I was reading through more of the 8th Letter to Rachel, and it covers some fairly oft-repeated concepts: the sealing of the 144,000, and the means by which they overcome the World based on this verse: “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Yahshua the Messiah.” (Rev 12:17)

We see by this that the latter-day believers are faithful to our Father’s commandments. This alone identifies the latter-day remnant of the faithful as Sabbath-keepers, and would convict the minds of the genuinely open-minded, where it not for the many deceptions associated with what the “commandments” are, and who these people are interpreted to be. Some churches, for example, teach that the latter-day saints of Yah are actually converted Jews, to whom the original Mosaic Law applies. Of course, to do this they must ignore the very cornerstones of Paul’s teachings, which explain that all who are Christ’s are Abraham’s Seed, (Gal 3:29) and that the “Israel” of the New Testament is the same as the Israel of the Old... but with Gentiles “grafted in,” (Rom 11:17-24) and this constitutes the undivided Body of Yahshua, and the earthly Temple of His Spirit. (Eph 2:11-22)

We further see that the Redeemed from among men will have the “testimony of Yahshua the Messiah,” which indicates (not the works of Ellen White, although that is a valid if limited application) exactly what it means: we testify what Yahshua testified. We speak what He spoke, and with the same authority that He received from the Father. We declare that we have been freed from sin by the sacrifice of the Messiah, and the lives that we now live are free of both sin and death its consequence. We testify that because we are set free, we do those things that please our Father, for we are not constrained from doing so by the power of our flesh, or the wickedness of the carnal man’s spirit... and that because we have received the Holy Spirit we have both the desire and will to accomplish righteousness. We can also speak with perfect assurance, doubting nothing of this testimony... because the testimony of Yahshua is also “the spirit of prophecy,” which all Yah’s people are to be (as we discussed in a previous study) at least to the extent that we can say with Paul, “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” (2Tim 4:8) This is a prophetic statement, and one that we are all called to make.

It is also related to what I want to discuss a little further this week.

Finally, though, from that verse we see that the third identifying feature of the saints is that the Dragon makes war with them. Now, merely being the victim of persecution does not identify one as righteous. As Peter wrote, there are many reasons why men may suffer in this world, but if we suffer as a “Christian,” for the sake of the Savior’s will, then we are blessed indeed, and refined for everlasting service. It is not those who are persecuted, but those who are persecuted for the sake of the Law and the Testimony, these are they whom the Father and Son call their own, and of whom they will not be ashamed in the Day of Judgment.

This week, I want to talk primarily about these latter two ideas, first: we have a prophetic faith that gives us a testimony free from doubt. The world’s churches will say, “I seem to be doing okay now, maybe, but who can say if I will not sin tomorrow?” This is not taking up the cross of Yahshua and walking. This is not bearing the powerful, heart-reaching, sin-rebuking testimony that the Son of Yah shed upon the world. Second: we are living in a time of judgment... we are judged by the world, and shall be found wanting according to their standards, policies, and obedience. But at the same time, we are judged by the Highest of Courts, with the earnest expectation of being witness to the vindication of our Father’s name and character, and standing with Him when the light is once again separated from the darkness.

The Bible both begins and ends with the separation of light and darkness, the first in the material world, and the second in the spiritual world, and only those who know the light, and love the light, will be called the “children of the Day.” (1Th 5:5)

If we are children of the Day, we are to have boldness in the day... in this Day of Judgment in which the world judges us, and in the Day of our Father’s judgment, when the wheat and tares are forever separated one from another.

As I was reading through the words of the eighth letter, which brings to mind all these concepts that are worth rehearsing from time to time, one verse really caught my attention, and it is this that I would like to share with you. It is this one: “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world.” (1John 4:17)

This is one of those verses that – at least to me – are so full of beauty, and of power, that it is difficult to grasp it all at once, perhaps not even after many readings. Similar to the verse from 2Corinthians 5 that tells us we are the “righteousness of God” in Christ, so we have a verse here that with its simplicity, and with its strength, bestows upon us a promise that opens up all of Heaven for the believer.

We know that our Father is Love. We know that it is love that identifies us as His true servants. We know that it is the love of the Father and Son that caused Them to redeem us from sin and death. We know that it is love itself that keeps the universe together, for it is through Christ – the embodiment of agape in the flesh – that all things “consist,” (Col 1:17) or stay together, “for of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen.” (Rom 11:36)

And we also, His children, may not only love, not only share in the very essence of our Creator, but we may have our love “perfected,” so that there is no difference in the type and quality of the love that we have, and the love of the Father Himself, who has given all things for our sakes.

As John says in the verse right below the one on which we are focusing today, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” (1John 4:18)

There are many things that the world fears. There are snakes and scorpions, there is shame and suffering, failure, rejection, loneliness, death, and so on. But all of these, each of these, sometimes individually, our Father has shown us, and then said, “Fear not.” We are given power over the beasts of the earth. We are told that we shall not be “shamed” before the world. We are assured that whatsoever suffering we endure as Christians it will all be to the glory of our Father. We shall not fail nor be discouraged. We are adopted into the family of Yahweh, and therefore shall never be rejected or lonely. We are inheritors of everlasting life; therefore, death has not the “sting” for us as it does to those who go to the grave in ignorance of what follows the departure of the breath.

What, then, remains for us to fear? What fear that a human may hold is not identified in the Scriptures, and then covered over with promises and assurances?

And furthermore, lest we be tempted by emotions or doubts, our Father has built a strong enclosure around His precious Garden, with safe boundaries – His Law, with strong guardians – through the ministry of His angels, and with guides – the brethren.

But even with all these things in place, which are certainly true, and vital for our spiritual health, these are not the focus of John’s statement. Certainly, if we were alone on an island, or nailed to a cross as a thief, we would not have the time or opportunity to take advantage of these various blessings – but even then, we would have all we need. We would have all we need because as John says, what perfects our love, what casts out fear, and what gives us boldness in the day of both the world’s and our Father’s judgment, is for this cause, for this reason: “because as He is, so are we in this world.”

Now, some might say, “If that is all that is required, then why do we need the Law? Why do we need the Church and its members?”

“Why does the Bible (and you CSDAs) talk so much about covenants and unity, if the ‘unity’ that gives us the true and everlasting blessings is the unity between our individual selves and the Almighty?”

The answer is because there is no true boundary between where our needs end, and our abilities begin. Let me put that another way: the thief on the cross might save himself through his last-minute confession, but he can do no other good for the Kingdom of Heaven. One on an island

may find a Bible, read it, and be converted, but no other souls will benefit from the blessings that he receives. Our Father puts upon us no more than we can bear, but the other side of that is, the more that we are made able to bear, the more He can place upon us, and the greater we may serve Him and our fellow man.

Those who take advantage of the blessings that our Father gives us reveal that they are indeed “as He is” in this world, for they do not consider their pride, their desires, their fears, to be more important than strengthening themselves, equipping themselves for the work through the benefits of the Law, the Church, and the protection of the angels. They manifest the love that identifies them as the “born again,” in that, when they see an opportunity to strengthen the bond between themselves and the Father and Son, and Their people, they do not let anything prevent them from doing so.

It is certainly true that if they physically cannot do these things, their love is no less for it – because they would if given the opportunity. We know this because it is what Yahshua did during His time on Earth. He was perfectly faithful to His Father’s Law. He submitted Himself to all the ordinances of the Jewish and soon-to-appear Christian Church... even up to being baptized that all righteousness might be fulfilled, though He had no need of the watery grave.

Yahshua did these physical things so that, by following Him in the flesh, we might be just like Him in the Spirit. By acknowledging and receiving the gifts He has given to us, we reveal that we are empty of pride, of selfishness, of fear... and then we are filled with His spirit, with agape, with the desire and power to do the very works of omnipotence while yet in this sinful flesh.

If we know these things, if we do these things, if we permit them to come often to our mind, then what can Satan say to cause us distress? Unpleasant thoughts are dismissed, cast away so completely that even the memory of them would cause us no pain, only another testimony of victory. Temptations are endured with perfect integrity, because the Spirit in us is a spirit of firm adherence to divine principle. Love is the motive for all our words and actions – we do not speak or act thoughtlessly, without consideration for others. We do not seek to dominate or cast others down, but to lift them up in the glory of Yahshua, even if we must permit them to stand on us for a while as they learn to do this. We do not shrink from the sacrifice, if by our testimony, example, and ministry we might win the poor in spirit. We show great boldness in this, because we are like Him.

And we do not shrink from the opinions of the world either. The world seeks to make the Christian ashamed of His testimony, of his beliefs, of his convictions. The opinion is becoming, and growing more powerful daily, that if you believe in these “old superstitions” about God, and His creation of the universe, and His instructions to us concerning sin and righteousness, you are not only intellectually inferior, but you might also be dangerous as well. As human history draws to a close, these sentiments will only intensify, and humanity will not be able to see its

true enemy, the spirit that works through men to draw the world further and further away from holiness.

But we are to be lights in that world. We are to be lanterns, and we are called to perfect holiness in the fear of Yah, which means the perfection of love, so that all that is within us that would respond to the world and its spirit is overcome, and regardless of what is said during the days of the world's judgment, "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." (Dan 12:3)

As it is written, "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment; and her converts with righteousness." (Isa 1:26)

Let us speak of these things, and think on these things. Let us know these things by heart, rehearsing these precious promises to ourselves, and one another, unto peace, and joy, and unto salvation.

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