

Truth and Reality

Happy Sabbath to everyone.

This week, I would like to share with you a topic that Giselle and I were discussing yesterday evening just before the New Moon began. In fact, the origin of it was a statement made, I think by pastor, in a much earlier meeting, about evidence... and that had me thinking about two words that we usually use interchangeably, those being “truth” and reality.”

Technically, those two do have the same essential meaning; however, in the Christian context they have a slight difference in the way that they can be used, and this allows us to be more precise in filtering our thoughts, toward the perfecting of Yahshua’s character.

I do not recall the initial discussion that started me thinking along these lines, but it was something about a group of people moving by faith, even when the “evidence” seemed to be against them. The question posed to the Church was, “Was there any evidence to support these individuals’ concerns?” My initial response was “No,” because they had the promises of Yah to guide them. It turns out, though, that I was reading the question a little differently than the intention, which is that there WAS “evidence” of what they had before them as a source of temptation to doubt their faith, and their instruction to move forward.

Again, I do not recall the exact example used, but we can find a Biblical one to demonstrate what I mean. Consider the twelve spies that were sent into Canaan to survey the land that Yah had intended for Israel’s inheritance. When the spies returned, ten of the twelve came with terrifying reports of beasts, and giants, and rough terrain...

There are different viewpoints on how much these ten spies were exaggerating the challenges of taking Canaan, but the fact remains that these individuals did see things that would make the work ahead of them quite difficult, and little to suggest that they would ultimately be victorious. The evidence, it seems, was against them. And yet Joshua and Caleb spoke from a different spirit. Now, these two faithful spies had seen the same things as the other ten. They had witnessed the warriors among the Canaanites, and the matters to overcome... but in their eyes, the evidence did not weigh heavily against the promises they had received from the Father. “And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, ‘Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.’” (Num 13:30)

This is the voice of faith. This is the voice of trust in the Almighty, and a fore-runner of the Faith of Yahshua. This is the invincible testimony that each of us must bear in the face of things that Satan has arrayed against us in these last days. This experience is recorded for us, for our learning, that we should not make the mistakes that the ten spies did, and focus on the record of our senses, vs. the record of the promises of Yah.

You may recall... one of the most powerful objections to the Victory Message (as far as the worldly mindset is concerned) is that “We know it is impossible to cease from sin, because I have tried it before, and neither I nor anyone I know has been able to stop.” Some Bible commentaries that I have read look at 1 John 3:9 and admit that John does seem to intend exactly what we read it to be saying – that those who are born of Yah do NOT commit sin. But then, they add, while that’s a wonderful ideal it just doesn’t measure up to the “practical realities of Christian life.” And there is the voice of the ten spies, rising up to keep Israel in the wilderness.

Perhaps we can distinguish things in this way. What is truth? Pontius Pilate asked this of Yahshua, and received no verbal reply. Yah’s word tells us exactly what “truth” is:

“All the paths of Yahweh are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies.” (Psalm 25:10)

“Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy Law is the truth.” (Psa 119:142)

“O Yahweh, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.” (Isa 25:1)

“Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.” (Mic 7:20)

“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” (John 17:17)

“This is He that came by water and blood, even Yahshua the Messiah; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.” (1John 5:6)

Whenever the Scriptures tell us that something “is” truth, it is always tied to some vital aspect of the Father’s personality or divinity. The Word of Yah is “truth.” The works of Yah are “truth.” The Law of Yah is “truth.” The Spirit of Yah is “truth.”

It is right that Yahshua should be silent when Pilate asked Him, “What is truth,” for the pagan governor, more concerned with the will of the people than the principles of justice, simply had no framework in which to understand the answer. He was denying the truth, and betraying the truth, by allowing Yahshua to be punished when even he knew that there was no offence in Him... what spoken testimony, at that point, would change his heart and mind?

So then, we can say that from a Biblical, specifically Christian, perspective, “truth” is what Yah does, and what He says. The promises of Yah are “truth,” and the works that we do in Him are “truth” as well, for we are told, “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.” (1John 1:6)

By contrast, if we saw we have fellowship with Him, and we don’t walk in darkness, we have an honest testimony, and we “do the truth.” This is a wonderful unity we have with the Father and

Son, as it says elsewhere, (and as I really enjoy quoting, and thinking about) “that we might be made the righteousness of [the Father] in [the Son].” (2Cor 5:21)

Now, if the “truth” involves Yahweh, what shall we say about “reality?” Ideally, whatsoever is “true” ought also to be “real.” The way it is used in practice, however, is a bit different. Neither the words “reality” nor “real” appear in the Bible. Looking the word up in the dictionary, we might find lots of references to things that are “objectively true,” that exist whether or not we believe in them or know about them. On the other hand, we might occasionally find something like this one, by Collins English Dictionary: “The state of things as they are or appear to be, rather than as one might wish them to be.”

Based on this, one might reasonably conclude that when we speak of something being “real,” there is sometimes the component of our perceptions, of what things appear (to us) to be as a result of our senses. This is indeed how it is used in actual, modern speech – someone who does not act in accordance with accepted norms is said to be “detached from reality.” Someone with unusual expectations might be said to be “unrealistic.” None of these things necessarily define the actions or words of such individuals as being “untrue.”

The prophets of Yahweh often predicted things that were unexpected. They had visions of the future of unlikely events that would by any definition be considered “unrealistic.” It was not “realistic” for those listening to Noah’s warnings to pack their bags and move into the Ark. It conflicted with the reality of the Israelites to accept Jeremiah’s statements that they would be captured by Babylon (after all, they had the Temple of Yahweh). If the final events of the Book of Revelation were to play out before the world tomorrow, it could only be described as “unreal” by those onlookers who had never beheld those scenes in their minds’ eyes with eager expectation.

But... those things are all true. They are all based on Yah’s Word, and Spirit, and promises. The work of Yah is not often “evident;” that is, it is not always preceded by evidence that our senses can accept. When Elisha and his servant were surrounded by the armies of Yahweh, there was no evidence of this that the servant could detect, and yet, “Elisha prayed, and said, ‘Yahweh, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.’ And Yahweh opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” (2Kings 6:17)

Now, we as Yah’s servants do not wish to deny reality. We live in a world established on the foundation of Yah’s Law, and as such, effect follows cause. Evidence does, indeed, tell us about the world around us, and the reality of our situation... however, this must never be allowed to obscure “truth,” which includes the invisible work of our Father in the world that brings about (in His timing) visible results.

For us, the right course of action is not to disregard evidence, or reality, but to understand that our perception of reality is limited to the input of our senses, and our knowledge. And it is

through knowledge of Himself that Yah can work miracles through His people, by going against impossible challenges, giants in the land, long roads to travel, daily temptations, false witnesses, financial concerns, and so on, to advance His Kingdom, to perfect our characters, and to redeem our brethren from the world.

So, this is a fairly basic, simple idea... but it was a blessing for Giselle and myself to review this topic, because we find that it gives power to our prayers. As we pray, we know that our Father hears us, and we believe with all our hearts that He answers. Even in times when what we pray for is “unrealistic,” when they are miracles against which all the evidence seems to be opposed, it is then that we must say, “Father, your word is truth. Your promises to us are truth.”

It is only in this way that we walk free, and forever free, of sin and death, of failure and discouragement. The “reality” of this world, that the god of this world has noised abroad, is that “everybody” sins. Everyone is walking around in sinful flesh, and being subjected to temptations that are far stronger than our mortal wills can resist. But, “What is truth?” Yahshua is truth, and as He abides in us, it is the truth that sets us free... so that we can walk on water, so that we can pass through the eye of a needle, so that we can inherit everlasting life – an idea utterly foreign to these mortal bodies.

But these are the promises of our Father to us, so that while we receive evidence, and process it, and so navigate this world, we also know that we are merely visitors here, and that the truth we know is greater by far than the realities on which our senses may agree. This is the blessing of walking in the spirit, not in the flesh... of walking by faith, and not by sight, and so we overcome, forever, the limitations of these fallen bodies, to the glory and praise of our Father in Heaven.

Creation 7th day Adventism
flyingcreature@hotmail.com