

For His Name's Sake

Happy Sabbath to everyone.

In our last meeting, our discussion centered on the theme of “unity.” When Yahshua dwells within us, by the will of the Father, and we in Him, this is a one-ness that we have discussed a number of times in the past. However, what I shared with the Church was a realization that was a little burst of “new light,” at least to me, in terms of what that means.

When we are “one” with the Father and Son, of course we share in Their divine nature, in Their character and principles, and in Their complete separation from sin – and all of this results in Righteousness by Faith and Victory over Sin. Yet even these “key” doctrines for Christianity are simply the effects, the consequences, of being atoned to, reunited with, the Creator.

There are other effects as well, such as everlasting life, and this is because when we are One with something or someone in the spirit, we are indistinguishable from them to a certain extent. I gave several examples of this; sin has no power over us, because it has no power over Yahshua. Demons have the same relationship to Yahshua's followers as they have to Him. The authority He had over them has been given to those who live and operate in His name. Death has no hold on us, because it could not contain the Son of Yah; and we are One with Him in this way as well.

Now, Peter said that Paul's writings contain a lot of spiritual concepts, “in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.” (2Pet 3:16) The problem is not with the Scriptures or their teachings, but with the attempts to use them by the “unlearned and unstable.” Ideally, a study of the Word of Yah would help to stabilize the unsteady, end educate the unlearned, but some go into the Scriptures with improper motives as well as an unreliable spiritual foundation, and the result is destruction.

So in this matter as well, there is danger. Without a clear understanding of principles such as individuality in religion, preferences, conviction, and sanctified communication, the doctrine of truly being “One” with the Father and Son has resulted in various false teachings, cultic organizations, and apostasy. Nevertheless, Yah has chosen to reveal the Gospel and all these aspects for our blessing; and certainly the 144,000 need to understand the unity that they have with the Almighty so that they may follow the Lamb perfectly and with understanding.

There is another aspect of this unity that I want to look at this week, and it is indicated in the title of the study: “For His Name's Sake.” I vaguely recall that we had a study some years ago with the same, or a similar title, but I believe that the verses of the Bible that use this and similar phrases can offer us new insights if examined in the light of what we have been discussing lately.

So, let us look at a few of these, and see the message that they convey to us.

“For Yahweh will not forsake His people for His great name's sake; because it hath pleased Yahweh to make you His people.” (1Sam 12:22)

“He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.” (Psa 23:3)

“For thy name's sake, O Yahweh, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.” (Psa 25:11)

“Nevertheless He saved them for His name’s sake, that He might make His mighty power to be known.”
(Psa 106:8)

“But I wrought for my name’s sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt.”
(Ezek 20:9 – and repeated in Ezek 20:14 and 20:22)

“Therefore say unto the house of Israel, ‘Thus saith the Lord Yahweh: I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name’s sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.’” (Ezek 36:22)

From the New Testament...

“And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake, but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”
(Mat 10:22)

“And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.” (Mat 19:29)

“I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake.” (1 John 2:12)

I did not intend to give so many examples, but there is quite a variety of concepts being expressed here, and of course the promises associated with Yah’s name are very good. I also noticed, as I was collecting these, an interesting parallel between Ezekiel and Matthew. Each of these writers uses the phrase “name’s sake” the most in his respective Testament (Old and New), and each is extremely concerned with the reputation of the Almighty among His people.

We see from the overall idea here that one of the primary motivating factors our Father has in influencing human affairs is the preservation of the integrity and reputation associated with His name.

Now, if this is a major motivation of our Father, and we, His people, claim to be one with Him, what should this tell us about our own motivations?

As was the case with so many doctrines, such as Victory over sin, the Investigative Judgment, and the spirit of the Sabbath, I really only heard the phrase, “vindicating our Father’s name” when I began studying with the CSDA Church.

I am sure there was some influence of it in the teachings I did receive; after all, it is not a new concept by any means. It never received any significant focus that I can recall, however, and the Scriptures describe it as a very important idea so far as our Heavenly Father is concerned.

Yahweh’s desire is the vindication of His character, and when we are One with Him, this naturally becomes our desire as well. This is an ironic reversal of what the world would consider to be “selfishness.” Our Heavenly Father, who seeks to save us from destruction, wants us to focus on Him. By contrast Satan, who is trying to destroy us, wants us to focus on “self,” and not on him at all. This is another one of those paradoxes that occur from time to time, similar to “Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.” (Luke 17:33)

We are willing to lose our lives, not merely to persecuting powers, but to Yah's will. We give up our "selves" for Yah's sake and, in uniting our spirits with His Holy Spirit, we are transformed. We succeed where our first-parents failed, for they listened to the serpent and operated out of self-interest, to make themselves equal to Yah. In accepting Yahshua, we acknowledge that we are wholly dependent on Him, and render Him worship. When we do this, the serpent has no claims on us.

So, why is it the Father's desire is the vindication of His character? Yah does things for His name's sake, because only His Law is the way of life. Only His love is the power that sustains the universe, including the existence of all of His creatures. With regard to the earth, only His grace, and His sacrifice through the Person of His Son, can redeem humanity; therefore, His reputation's vindication, which is "for His name's sake," is really for our best good.

In light of that, the last Old Testament reference that I quoted above needs some clarification. This was: "Therefore say unto the house of Israel, 'Thus saith the Lord Yahweh: I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.'" (Ezek 36:22)

In this verse, Yah appears to set up a contrast – For His name's sake but NOT for our sakes. This might seem like a contradiction to what I've been saying, and also make the motivation appear to be less than perfectly honorable. However, the context explains this quite well.

Reading through Ezekiel 36, we read of an Israel under judgment. Because of their apostasy and sins, Yah says to them, "Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of men." (verse 12) In another place He says, "Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it." (verse 18)

The chapter as a whole is actually about hope, for immediately after pointing out the reasons for Israel's current troubles, the prophet speaks for Yah, saying, "I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Yahweh, saith the Lord Yahweh, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

"For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." (Ezek 36:26-28)

This is one of the most powerful passages in the Bible about the redemption that Yah provides for His people, and yet He speaks it to a people who have fallen far from His grace, and He prefaces it by saying, "Not for your sake, but for my name's sake."

The reason for this apparent conflict is because Yah works on behalf of His people in a corporate sense as well as an individual one. Of the multitude of Israelites that left Egypt in the Exodus, only a handful

survived to the Promised Land. Most died along the way, and the primary reason for this was the false report of ten of the spies sent in to obtain preliminary information about Canaan.

Because of this and other transgressions, such as the apostasy at the foot of Sinai, the nation was made to walk in the wilderness for forty years, and the reason was explicitly given: "I Yahweh, have said, I will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me; in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die." (Num 15:35)

In much the same way, the current residents of Israel would not see the ultimate restoration of Israel. Yah's love for His people prevented Him from forsaking them as a nation, but judgment was passed upon the individual ones responsible. Consider, however, how this restoration was to be accomplished. If Yah had not punished the transgressors, and merely restored the nation, the heathen would have no reason to respect the divine Law. If Israel were to prosper while violating the commandments, they would be no different in character than the enemies of the Almighty, and there would be no effective way for them to teach the true religion to the world.

Therefore, the restoration of Israel required a three-step process:

- 1) The wicked must be punished in order to demonstrate the inviolable and eternal nature of the Law.
- 2) Yah's reputation must be restored in order to establish a foundation for His worship. He must be seen, not as a harsh judge, but as a loving Father who punishes sinners out of necessity, rather than arbitrary cruelty.
- 3) Those who follow and worship Yah must be shown to be more successful, joyful, and powerful, than the nations by which they were surrounded.

The preservation and exaltation of Yah's name was a critical stage of that process, and while it was not going to be done for the benefit of the transgressors (who would be dealt with in the first step above), it WAS ultimately done for Yah's people collectively, for those in the other nations who would be drawn to, and then become, Yah's people themselves, and for we who would come after at the very end of all things.

Ultimately, Israel never became the faithful People that the prophetic ministries had intended. They rejected and crucified the Heir of the Vineyard, and the glory that was to be theirs was passed to Another that was the Same, the Church. There is quite the parallel there in modern Adventism, who have had their glory taken from them to be given to Another that is also the Same, the CSDA Church that bears the Three Angels' Message to the world.

With that ministry that we have received comes the work that has always been the work of Yah's people, to walk in the Spirit, and by our words, actions, and testimonies, to speak the truth about the Creator. To the world we show Him faithful, loving, and just. This is the vindication of His name.

Our great Example, Yahshua, never did anything to directly preserve His own reputation, even though He was the Savior. He honored the Father, and the Father honored Him by lifting Him up on the Cross (though to His flesh this did not seem like an honor at the time) and then raising Him back to life and setting Him before the universe. Since that time, the Father has preserved the knowledge of Yahshua's

life, death, and resurrection among humanity, often in miraculous ways, so that everyone may know the Name that has been given for our salvation.

So many things, so many more seemingly dramatic things, that one little ministry and an execution in Jerusalem, have vanished from humanity's collective memory. But the Gospel has endured, and we have become its messengers. We are not worthy to bear such a weight of glory, but Yahshua in us bears it always, and perfectly.

We stand, then, before eternity, with Yah's name before us. We stand, as the redeemed from the earth, having been drawn into unity with the divine character by the will of the Father and the work of the Son. With this in mind, it falls upon us to acknowledge our dependence upon Them for our lives, our freedom, and our salvation as the people of Everlasting Israel to whom those promises in Ezekiel 36, and other places, have been renewed. Let us devote ourselves, armed with the knowledge of Yahshua's character within us, to the vindication of our Father's name. As we preserve His name, He preserves ours, for He says, "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." (Isa 49:16) Because of agape, we seek one another's best interest at all times, regardless of the cost.

The first Commandment says to love Yah with all our heart, and mind, and soul. We are commandment-keeping Christians; therefore, we do all things for our Father's name's sake. We vindicate the name of Yahweh your Almighty One, according to the commandment. The Bible teaches us how to do this, that we may know it for ourselves unto salvation, and that we may teach it to others as well.

David.

Creation 7th day Adventism