

Zahakiel: Let's begin. Pastor, please offer an opening prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Heavenly Father. Thank you for this holy time and we ask for Your guidance and inspiration for our Sabbath convocation. In Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

daphna: Amen

Barb: Amen

Naraiel: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Adriel777: Amen

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath to everyone. Tonight's study is called "The Elements of Character." I suspect it will be a little bit longer than our usual weekly meetings, and we began a few minutes late, but I thank you in advance for your patience, and I believe you will find what I have to share with you tonight well worth your time. What I wish to speak about is simple, so simple a child can grasp it, and yet so deep that we may study it for years and not discover all of its significance – like so much that is the truth of Yahweh.

Last week, we spoke for some time about the "will," the power of choice that our Creator has placed within us so that we may properly reflect His nature as a free, moral Entity. We spoke of its role in bringing the invisible things of Yah into the visible world. In human actions, in the works of the saints, the Faith of Yahshua is revealed, and men are saved. Because of our will, because of our decisions, we choose to accept the Sacrifice of the Son on our behalf, and are thereby transformed, even as it is written, "And the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.' And let him that heareth say, 'Come.' And let him that is athirst come. And *whosoever will*, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev 22:17)

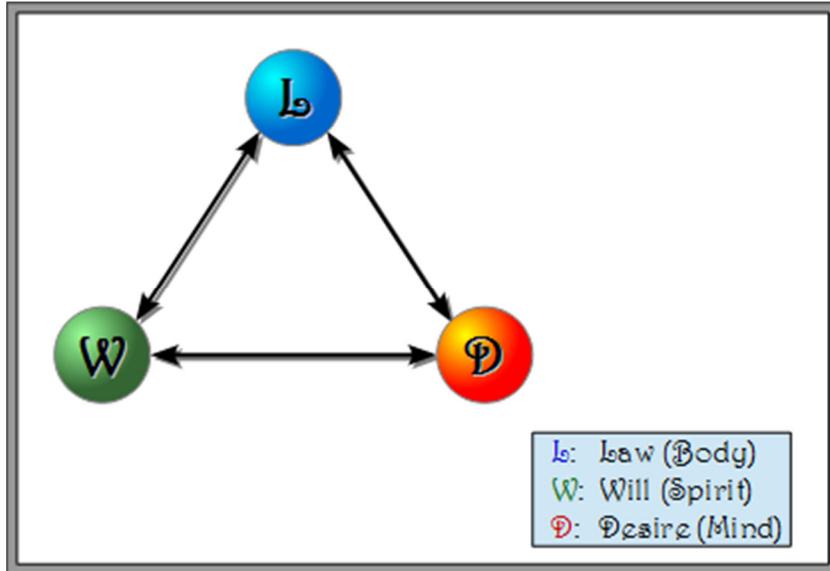
It is thus that we cooperate with divinity in the labor of the Gospel as Yahweh has intended. The will, however, is only one aspect of the "finished product" of salvation; that is, the character of Christ Yahshua manifest in human flesh. The will alone cannot accomplish the Father's purpose within His people, and therefore if our understanding is to be perfect, it must be expanded.

In previous studies, we have discussed the subject of character. We have looked, for example, at the formation of character by means of its "chain," that thoughts lead to actions, actions lead to habits, habits make up our character, and character determines destiny. The Chain of Character is the focus of several articles such as "Every Link in The Chain"

<http://www.faithofjesus.to/Binary/essays...>

Usually, when we discuss character, we are speaking either of its formation or its results, rarely what it IS, what character actually consists of in essence. And so, as I contemplated the subject of character, and prayed for further insight into the matter, Yahweh gave me this diagram:

<http://93.88.247.151/CharElements.html>



Zahakiel: Let me know if you can all see it, and if you can keep it open in another window, it may be useful to refer to it from time to time.

Barb: I see it

Adriel777: I see it and have copied it to transcript. 😊

Peter: See it.

Kim: See it

Pastor Chick: It opened.

Zahakiel: We find here three elements: The Law, the Will, and the Desires.

The Law, although it touches on thoughts in the final Commandment, is primarily designed to teach righteousness by describing behaviors; thus, it has to do with the realm of the Body. The Desires are the things that we want. They are formed by thinking about the things that we can see or conceive; therefore, they naturally belong to the arena of the Mind. The Will, our topic of late, is that aspect of humanity that touches divinity. It determines our actions based upon our beliefs, and thus it perfectly reflects the Spirit. A pure will leads one to perform the works of Heaven, and one can only do so by the leading of the Holy Spirit. Conversely, a corrupted will is bound to the works of the flesh, being controlled by the baser spirits of either the "self" or the fallen tempters.

Character is perfected when all three elements, Law, Desire, and Will, are in perfect balance. Each alone is important, but incomplete without the other two. I will explain what I mean by using the following pattern of simple "equations" thus: Elemental Formula = Result → Effect → Impact. This is simpler than it sounds. We will look at various combinations of the three elements of character, the result of that combination, and then its immediate effect and long-term impact on the soul.

As a first example, let me illustrate what I have already stated:

$L + W + D = \text{The Character of Yahshua} \rightarrow \text{Perfection} \rightarrow \text{Salvation.}$

This is a re-statement of what I have said above. The presence, in balance, of the Law, the Will and Desire, results in the character of Yahshua. We know what our Father expects of us (Law), we want to be in harmony with His will (Desire), and we make the choice to actually accomplish it (Will). When the character of Yahshua is formed within an individual, he or she is "perfect, even as [our] Father which is in Heaven is perfect," (Mat 5:48) and the result is inevitably everlasting life.

But what happens if there is no balance? I will present to you here the effect of isolating each of the elements, and I urge you to pray over, and study, what I am revealing here...as it has the power to identify many evils from which we may repent as a People and be cleansed.

Here is the first: L – W – D = Oppression → Rebellion → Satanism

If there is only Law, but no Desire to follow it, and no Will to accomplish it, then order can only be maintained by force. If the universe were to operate this way, with angels and humans forced to obey the dictates of the Law despite their desires or the freedom to choose, this would be oppression. This would be slavery, and the inevitable result would be rebellion in those who desired this freedom. Human beings who see God's requirements this way, as "We must do this and that in order to be saved," will not be satisfied with His salvation, because they do not know His character. Like Satan himself, they will rebel against the oppression that they believe is taking place, and accept the religion of "self" that the demons practice. The Law does not save, as the Scripture rightly tells us; it exists to teach. (Gal 3:19-25) It is only when Christ is within us, giving the desire for righteousness, and the will to accomplish it, that we will be in unity with the divine, and escape the fate of the fallen ones.

The next isolated element is the Will. As I began by saying, as important as the will is (as are all three elements) by itself it cannot accomplish righteousness.

We may see: W – L – D = Anarchy → Heresy → Separation

If there is only the Will, the drive to make choices and do things, without knowledge of the Law, and without the Desire for righteousness, only chaos can result. The Spirit of Prophecy, and we ourselves, have taken a largely negative view of such things as independent ministries, and this is the reason why. Independent ministries get some idea, some doctrine, that they believe is the "key to it all," and then they run with it, neither teaching the Law as it ought to be taught, nor believing in Righteousness by Faith, which comes from Yahweh answering our prayers, our Desire, to be perfect in love and character. The result of this chaos, this anarchy, is "Heresy," a word found translated that way in only one verse – Acts 24:14. As much as it has been (mis)used by legalistic traditions in the past, it simply means "division." Will without Desire or Law causes one to become stubborn, literally "willful," not wanting to do anything that would edify the Body of Christ, or promote sanctification, but only to resist any and all attempts (including by the Holy Spirit) to inspire holy desires or a knowledge of Yah's true requirements. With such an individual or group there can be no unity, no harmony, so we see divorces, dis-fellowships, denominationalism, independent ministries, and various other evils that result from schisms. Is there chaos, disharmony, or the threat of separation? This imbalance is the reason why.

The third element in isolation may be described this way: D – W – L = Perversion → Frustration → Self-destruction

Desire, without temperance that comes from the right use of the Will, or knowledge of truth that comes from familiarity with the Law, is a terrible curse. The Buddhist religion, in fact, teaches that all suffering in the world comes from desire, and therefore one of their core principles is to release one's self from all desire in order to know peace. This is not terribly far from the truth, but the Christian knows that there are "holy" desires, because we are in a relationship with the Creator who crafted them, and taught them to us through His Law. By the work of the Holy Spirit, we fulfill righteous desires and eliminate carnal ones, and thus know peace. This is the Sabbath of the Lord.

We find many examples of unbridled desire in the Scriptures, such as the unfortunate incident between King David's children Amnon and Tamar. (2Samuel 13) I won't recount the details here, but we know well enough that sorrow is always the result of unholy desires, whether they are fulfilled or not. This leads to frustration, and ultimately destruction of the soul.

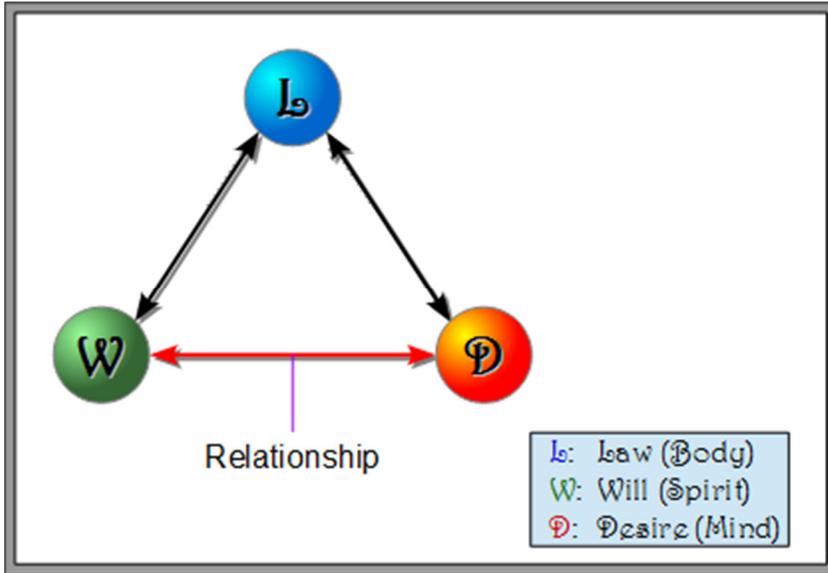
Now, I use the word "perversion" there, not in the strictly sexual sense (although that can easily result from desires unbridled by self-control and Yah's commandments) but more generally. The appetite for food may be perverted, for example, or the appetite for fashion. In each case the cause is exactly the same – desire without restraint of the Law or the Will.

We can easily see, then, that while each of the elements of character is important, none of them in isolation can bring about the results that our Father desires for us. In fact, focusing on any one element of the three to the exclusion of others will inevitably result in total disaster, even though each of the three is absolutely "good." It is exactly in this sense that the New Testament will speak of the Law and the Commandments. The "Law is good," as it is written, but it must be used "lawfully," properly. (1Tim 1:8) It is described as a blessing; however, for if it is going to be used properly, then obviously it needs to be "used." We dare not throw out the Law simply because it has been misused by many over the years.

Now, if one element of character used in isolation results in disaster, what would happen if we had "most" of the formula? What if we had two out of three, the "compounds" from which character is built? The popular quotation is, "Two out of three ain't bad," but in spiritual things, two out of three is imperfection, incompleteness... defeat. We want the entire substance of character, not merely some of the atoms or the molecules of which it is constructed by the Divine Craftsman.

Just as with the individual units, each pair of elements is a good thing. They are only made corrupt by the loss of the third element, so just looking at the various pairs on their own merits, we find:

<http://93.88.247.151/CharElementsA.html>

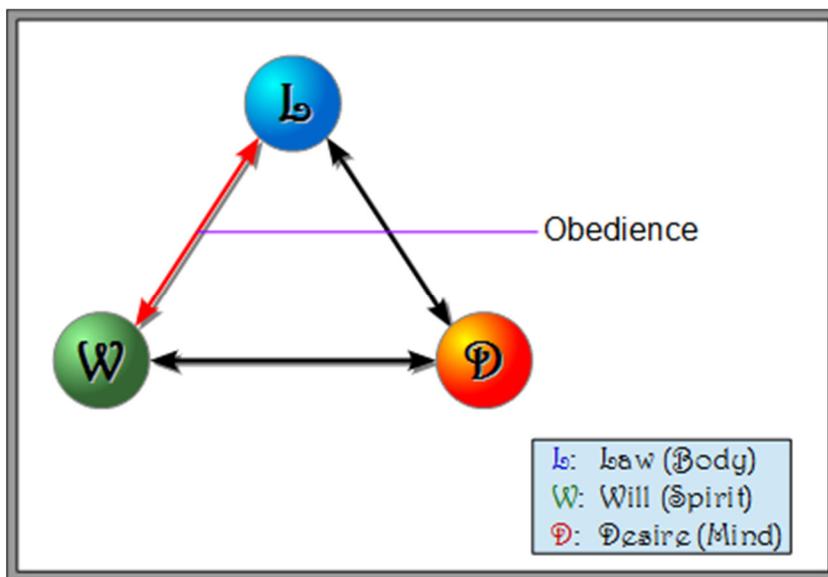


The formula for this diagram is: $W + D = \text{Relationship}$, or we might say Commitment

We want to be close to some person, place, or spiritual ideal, and by our choices we accomplish it. This is the foundation on which committed relationships are built. We follow through with our decisions.

Next, we have this:

<http://93.88.247.151/CharElementsB.html>

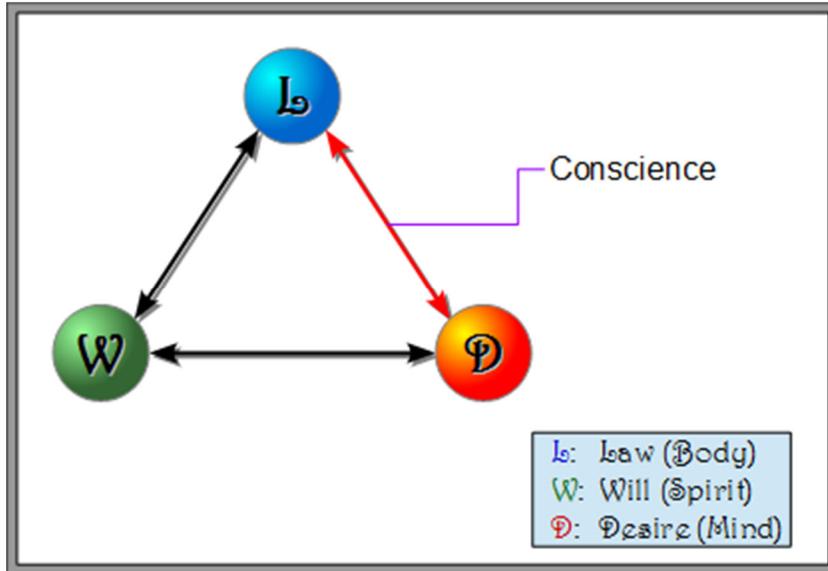


$L + W = \text{Obedience}$

We know what Yah requires, and we choose to accomplish it. This is obedience; naturally, this is a very good and essential component of character.

Zahakiel: Our final pair may be illustrated in this way:

<http://93.88.247.151/CharElementsC.html>



$L + D = \text{Conscience}$

One knows the requirements of Yahweh, and desires to do them in his or her spirit. This is the educated and spirit-led conscience, one that prompts the individual toward righteousness, and clearly this is absolutely necessary for sanctification to occur.

Each of these is good, as I have said – absolutely vital; however, they are incomplete, and if the third is not brought in, then none of these pairs are sufficient to perfect the character. In fact, if growth is not continued into a perfect balance of all three, then the pairs harden, and become corrupt.

A relationship with the Father and Son is everlasting life, (John 17:3) but merely having a “spiritual” relationship with whatsoever or whosoever one worships (W + D) does not result in salvation, neither does blind obedience (W + L), or a refined conscience (L + D) without the actions resulting from the will that bring it to life.

Let us see, then, what happens if we remove even one of the three from our equations.

$L + W - D = \text{Legalism} \rightarrow \text{Hypocrisy} \rightarrow \text{Condemnation}$

With the Law and the Will, we have Obedience. If, however, we have obedience without desire, then we have dead formalism...and obedience that is mindless (remember, "Desire" is mind). We have legalism, justification based on the act of obeying, which quickly leads to hypocrisy. The word "hypocrite" in Greek literally means an "actor," a pretender, one who goes through the motions. Hypocrites will judge others by standards to which they do not hold themselves; however, Yahweh does hold them to these standards, for "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again," (Mat 7:2) since that is our understanding of truth. Hypocrites judged by their own standards will inevitably be found wanting; therefore blind obedience must necessarily end in condemnation at the time of judgment.

Next we have: $L + D - W = \text{Failure} \rightarrow \text{Discouragement} \rightarrow \text{Apostasy}$

One may know the Law, and desire to do it, having an awakened conscience. Without true conversion, however, without Yahshua abiding within that provides us with the will to accomplish righteousness, all we have is a measure of faith without works, an impotent and useless religion. Those who attempt to satisfy their conscience without the power to do so will fail, time and again. They are driven by guilt to enter into a "sin-repent cycle" well known to false religions, and cannot avoid becoming discouraged. They know the right thing to do, but they cannot find it within themselves to do it with any consistency. Ultimately, they will fall away from the faith altogether, because faith without works is "dead," (James 2:26) and they must therefore choose to believe something different, something other than the truth in order to justify themselves – the very definition of apostasy.

Finally: $W + D - L = \text{Ignorance} \rightarrow \text{Confusion} \rightarrow \text{Idolatry}$

I left this formula until the end for a reason. As a Church, collectively, many of our problems and potential problems with communication stem from this. We want to communicate with one another. We decide to, and do... but we have not always known the "rules" to make that communication effective. Do not think of the "Law" as only the 10 Commandments as they are worded in the Bible, but rather every principle of Yah's character that form the standard to which we are held. The relatively recent study on S.T.A.R.S. (<http://www.faithofjesus.to/forum/viewtop...> for those who wish to review it... was designed to correct this, and I think that perhaps it IS a good idea to periodically review that teaching. I have recommended to one or two of you that you print out that acronym, and what it means, and stick it right beside your computer's monitor, so that it will literally be "before you" in all your communication. I have noticed that some of our members still seem to have occasional problems understanding the idea of Gospel Order, for example, with its particulars and limitations.

In our examination of character, we will find the connection between very many principles of the Gospel, our doctrines, and various rules of thumb. This particular formula has great potential for application, as they all do, but as it is most relevant, we can expand on this one just a little further before we conclude and the work of applying all that this doctrine entails passes to us individually.

Where there is Will and Desire, where there is a relationship, a commitment or covenant, but no Law that determines righteousness, there will be ignorance of perfection, of what our Father truly requires of us. If there is activity within ignorance, confusion and misunderstandings naturally arise.

Now, confusion is a kind of idolatry, especially when knowledge is a gift that we can accept if we worship the true and only God. Confusion directly leads to idolatry, in fact, where religious observances are involved. There are many among the Churches who sincerely desire to follow the teachings of the Bible. Some of them are the nicest, most committed Christians one may ever meet. They are humble, meek, and kind-hearted. Many of us have testified from our own experiences that, though they be Sunday-keepers, or have a Trinitarian view of the Godhead, or teach doctrines contrary to the Biblical Feasts, or have this or that other teaching in error, they are doing what they know to do of righteousness with sincerity. Unfortunately, because they have not received the benefit of the Law in this New Testament age, they do not worship the God of the Bible in the perfect way that He has declared He ought to be worshipped.

The Father says, "Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the Law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets." (2Kings 17:3)

The Son says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

Of both the Father and Son it is written, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Yahshua." (1John 5:2, Rev 14:12)

This may be summarized simply as, "You have holy desire, and a sanctified will? Good...now learn the Law, and what Yahweh requires of you."

This is Agape love. This is the divine character. Those who do not know His Law will honor Him in all that they can, hence the influence of both the desire and the will (a relationship, a commitment) but Yah also says that without knowledge of Him in spirit and in truth, the people will perish. (John 4:24, Hos 4:6) They will not know how to prepare themselves for His perfect presence, nor for the darkness of the time of trouble nor for the bright glory of His Son's return, because they have not come to know His Person as it is expressed in the Commandments of the Law. For such as these, we pray for opportunities to teach the Gospel. Their desire makes them open, and their will ensures that if they learn the truth, they will commit to it.

To conclude for tonight, there is much here that we might yet discover and discuss about this simple idea, that perfection of character is the result of Yah's Law, sanctified Desire, and the conviction to use the Will in the right way. Within the born-again believer, they work in perfect concert; having knowledge of the Law, a Desire to do righteousness and the Will to bring it to life causes the appearance of the Fruit of the Spirit.

Taken in pairs, we find the same is true. A relationship with the Father and Son, as well as obedience to Their instructions, and having a Spirit-led conscience that maintains the mind in a state of peace is another way of describing the Character of Christ, but all three elements, and thus all three pairs, must be present.

In considering the importance of this idea, although we will have a transcript available, I also intend to adapt this study into an article for the Binary Angel website, but I felt impressed to share it with my brethren first, for we have need of what it can teach us. I have been blessed to learn much from contemplating it, and I consider that it, along with the Chain of Character study, and a

couple other related ones, form a foundational set of writings in which the truth for this generation is well represented.

For now, I will conclude, and ask if any of you have questions or comments for us to discuss.

Adriel777: Amen

Lucan: C

Peter: C:

Zahakiel: All right, if there aren't then I will ask Bro. Luke to close the meeting with a prayer. Oh, go ahead, Luke.

Lucan: I think this study will take some time to digest. At least, for me. I am inclined to agree regarding a "foundational set of writings..." I think that, in the way FoD has proven a good representation of our faith for Adventists, a similar package could be made for the world, or Christians who lack the "law" as described here. I would be interested in knowing what other related studies you have in mind for that purpose, perhaps via FB. It seems to me that someone in the flesh may experience a number of the described symptoms. I am thinking of Paul in Romans 6, describing himself as someone who had the law, and had the will to obey it above his peers, but found himself guilty of covetousness. That would place him as not having a conscience, but Yahshua said to him that he was kicking against the pricks of it. What are your thoughts on that example? <End.>

Zahakiel: Thank you for that comment. In Paul's case, "Desire" was out of balance, which hindered his conscience from perfecting his character. It fits the diagram as described. For your first of your statements, I am sure you are right, and I hope that everyone here WILL take some time to digest what I have presented, either by means of the transcript or the article (which I want to have ready as soon as tomorrow). For the rest of what you have said, I agree that a study such as this would be good for both the world and the Church, and so the article will probably contain the more generic terms "Jesus" and "God" for easy sharing...but (or perhaps, AND)...I truly believe there is much here for us as individuals and as a collective Body. Yah is showing us something by these elements of character, and how they interact. Go ahead, Peter.

Peter: I just want to say thank you and Amen for this study. I have a lot to think about and reflect on and search out and examine. End.

Adriel777: C

Zahakiel: Thank you for that. Go ahead, Jody.

Adriel777: I am always grateful to Yah for the studies he gives you to give to us and for your commitment to bring them to us each week, and this study is no different. I agree with both Bro Luke and Bro Peter and you as well, that this study needs to be gone over and taken time with, a blessing I get weekly as I re-read through the transcript to prepare it for posting to the forum. I also am interested in the other "foundational" studies and would like to see the same, something put together that we can hand out to the world. 😊 End

Zahakiel: The ones that come immediately to mind, at least as they relate to character, are the ones I mentioned tonight, the "Chain of Character" one, and the "STARS" one. They can perhaps be adapted into articles for easy non-CSDA digestion, and used in that way.

Adriel777: (Okay 😊)

Zahakiel: If I think of any others, I can include them, but I like Luke's idea of a Facebook post, which would suggest input from the other brethren as well. In any event, we should be familiar with our own writings, to be able to go over them and suggest a few.

Zahakiel: Are there any others with thoughts to share? All right, then I will ask Bro. Luke to offer a closing prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We are thankful for the perfect balance that you have called your children to, and the tools you have provided us, that our bodies, spirits, and minds may prosper. We ask for the blessing of your Spirit on our meditations, through the Sabbath hours and beyond. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen

daphna: Amen

Barb: Amen

Peter: Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

Kim: Amen

