

Dealing with Success and “Failure”

Qinael: Most holy and loving Father,

We come before you with praise and thanksgiving on this High Sabbath. We are doubly blessed as we are brought into remembrance of the perfect rest we have in you as, and our need for you to maintain it.

We ask for a double outpouring of your Spirit in like manner, as we come together to learn from your Spirit and your Word.

In the name of Yahshua we pray, amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Barb: Amen.

Giselle: Amen.

Jaime: Amen.

Maria: Amen.

Abraham: Amen.

Pastor “Chick”: Amen.

Ruthline: Amen.

Peterson: Amen.

Elyna: Amen.

Adriel: Amen.

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath and New Moon to all. I count it a matter of significance that, as Bro. Luke has mentioned, the first New Moon following this year’s Feast of Unleavened Bread is also what we call a “High Day,” a combination of the weekly and monthly rest.

Yahweh has truly blessed His people these last few weeks.

Peter: Amen.

Adriel: Amen!

Eagle: Amen!

Zahakiel: Although I was not physically present at the just-completed Feast of Unleavened Bread, I was nevertheless a partaker of the vital blessings that our Father has prepared for His children.

Because of His providence, the convocation was not interrupted by worldly forces, and in fact it was able to be extended so that the Spirit could work in Its full measure while there was occasion to do so. And now, we have been provided with an opportunity what we can only conclude will be the final evangelism effort in the United States... and we will all be engaged in fervent prayer for a harvest. But aside from that particular journey, this opportunity is a call to action for all of us. In whatever capacity we are able, through whatever doors and windows open before us, we must seize the occasion and speak of Yahshua’s love, and the saving grace presented to mankind through the unadulterated Gospel.

Let us pray for, and receive, and in some cases *create*, evangelism opportunities. We have the blessing of new members following the Feast, a most joyful thing. And with these new, faithful souls we have a new set of talents, a new range of options, for going forward with the great work. As we do so, I would like to talk about the way to deal with success and “failure.” In fact, this study has been entitled: Dealing with Success and “Failure,” and do note that the word “failure” is in quotes.

Let’s start by talking about that one. I put the word failure in quotation marks, because to speak of the Gospel, and to be rejected, is not a failure in our Father’s eyes. Christ said, “Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but Him that sent me.” (Mark 9:37)

Naturally, the alternative is just as true. Those who turn away from Yah’s messengers are rejecting Him as well. This is just what Yahweh said to Samuel, when the people were rejecting the system of prophets and judges in order to be like the other nations around them: kingdoms.

If we look at the track record of the Scripture’s heroes, we find that they did not have what the world would consider great success. Noah was only able to save eight individuals, including himself, from the waters of the flood. Jonah was able to delay the destruction of Nineveh for a time, but not permanently. Christ, the world’s greatest Teacher, was abandoned by all His followers at the time of the crucifixion, and even after His message went forth posthumously, it was soon corrupted by carnal hearts and minds... so today one can hardly distinguish those who call themselves His from the very worst of sinners.

To the weak in faith, this would surely be a discouraging set of facts.

We have been told that we, Christ’s true followers, will not be treated any better than He was. That means we must prepare to be misunderstood, rejected, and persecuted for our faith. When Isaiah volunteered to be sent out as Yah’s representative – as we discussed last New Moon – Yah told him, in the very next two verses after the ones we quoted then, “Go, and tell this people, ‘Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.’ Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.” (Isa 6:9, 10)

If the people would be willing to see, and to hear, they would be converted, and healed of their sin. But Yah knew that this would not happen, and He prepared His servant for this sorrowful experience. The question may arise... if Yahweh foreknew that Isaiah’s ministry would not win many – if any – hearts, why send him out at all? The answer is that regardless of people’s reaction to the truth, the Word MUST go forth, that none may say, in the judgment, “I was misled by Yahweh.” In addition, while the earth is the “center stage” for the Great Controversy, we are not the only beings involved in, and interested in, the outcome of this conflict. Isaiah was to testify against the nation’s collective hardness of heart, and thus cause it to be manifest visibly. This would make the ultimate judgment on earthly Israel, and the penalty thereof, understandably fitting to all who would look on.

Notice that, although the wording is that Isaiah’s ministry would “make” the hearts of the people fat, and their ears heavy, and their eyes dim... this is in the same sense that Yahweh “hardened” Pharaoh’s heart in Exodus. The language is less causative than the English translation would indicate. In other words Isaiah, like Yah Himself, provides an opportunity for the true character of those whom they encounter to

be made manifest. He would “make” these characteristics “appear,” not cause them to BE in the first place.

We had a New Moon study some time ago, in fact, that described the servants of Yahweh as “perfect mirrors.” By our testimonies, by our words and actions, we cause certain reactions, emotions and words, in others. These reactions reveal their true character, and we say that we are “reflecting” the character of those individuals. It was said of the Father this way in the Word: “With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright. With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the foward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury.” (2Sam 22:26, 27)

This tells us quite a bit about Yah’s personality – but it says something about human beings as well. That is, people tend to “project” their characteristics unto those with whom they interact, because they expect others to be like themselves. If we are kind and loving, we expect these characteristics in others, and so we tend to see the “good” in people, at least on a moral level. If we are selfish and wicked, we will tend to be suspicious of others, and our lives will not be happy ones.

The saints, however, go a bit beyond this. We are able to rightly discern the wicked from the righteous, and while we *attempt* to project the character of Yahshua into others, so that they can see themselves as they truly are, what we actually end up seeing is the reaction of others to Yahshua. You may have noticed this... at least in North American culture: The world can speak comfortably of Buddha, and Krishna, and any of the pagan gods... but when it comes to “Jesus Christ,” the name by which they know Yahshua, the worldly tend to become very uncomfortable. The reason why is simple: the pagan gods do not judge mankind (even if their lore and legends may claim it of them), but Yahshua has been appointed the true Judge of all by the Creator Himself. His servants represent that judgment (even when they are not “judging others”) and there is a spiritual tension that exists there.

In this generation, we have certainly experienced more rejections than acceptance of our words. How do we deal with this? We deal with it as Yahshua did. He knew that “few” would find the way to life. He knew that many would be called, but few chosen. He knew that it would be a rare thing for the Son of Man to find faith upon the earth. And yet, He did what He would have done to save a single soul from destruction. We must be of that mind also. As we speak the words of truth, we must be optimistic, and expect the best. But when we “fail” as it appears to outward perception, we must remember that the angels who bear Yah’s message have two functions: reaping the wheat, and binding the tares.

Even in experiencing rejection, unpleasant as it is, we are doing the work of Yah: causing souls to choose their side under the banner of Christ, or the banner of this world as symbolized by the Beast. And even in experiencing rejection, we are learning how better to represent Christ, and doing so each time knowing that this soul for whom we are laboring *can* accept the truth and be saved. It is that potential, and the knowledge that each soul is worth the attempt, that lets us avoid growing weary in well-doing. It is the love of Yahshua for all mankind working through us that allows us to deal with “failure” in an atmosphere (to use a term from a previous study) of victory, and even of joy.

When rejected, Christ said, “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken

of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.” (John 12:46-50)

This is Yahweh’s approach to judgment; and of course, it is perfect. Yahweh provides to mankind, through His servants’ labors, the way to salvation. If any reject it, Yah does not have “hard feelings” toward them, as the expression goes. In fact, it is quite the opposite. He does not become angry with them, and does not seek to penalize them for this rejection. When Yahweh *does* cause destruction and harm directly to human beings, the Scriptures call this “a strange work” and only takes place under some very specific circumstances, these being:

- a) The individual or individuals have already gone beyond the point that Yahweh foreknows is one of no return to grace. In other words, the acceptance of the truth is no longer something that will ever take place, and:
- b) The individual or individuals are preventing, or will prevent, the saints from doing the work of saving souls.

In the Old Testament, Yahweh removed the nations that were seeking to oppose the divinely-ordained movement of the Hebrew nation. In the New Testament, Yahweh has removed people that would either destroy the servants of Christ before their appointed time (Herod in Acts 12) or cause the Church to sin (such as with Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5).

For merely rejecting Yahweh, this is its own punishment. Those who do so cannot partake of Him, Who is Life, and will therefore, ultimately, go into nothingness. All the time, however, Yah loves and cares for His wayward children, and WE are not His faithful children unless our spirit and attitude toward them is the same.

We do not take offense when we are rebuffed. We seek to turn them to the light, we pray that they will be open to the Spirit, but our love for them, and our care for their salvation, cannot be diminished any more than our Father’s is. Should the opportunity present itself, we would, of course, try again... with the exception being that they, themselves, fall under both those circumstances listed above. If we are told by Yah’s inspiration that they have passed beyond the bounds of grace, and that they have made themselves an enemy of the saints, then it is written of them, “there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” (Heb 10:26, 27) And, “there is a sin unto death: I do not say that [the Christian] shall pray for it.” (1John 5:15b)

Now, what about success? How do we prepare for success? That is something that perhaps has not been discussed so often.

This is what Ellen White called “binding up the work.” It is not enough to simply talk someone into accepting the CSDA message. It is not enough to speak well and convincingly of the doctrines of the Church. These things will get some interest – will successfully draw the heart to Christ. But that is not the end of the work.

Well, that is not the end of the work for the true Christian. In many Churches – those with a particular kind of doctrinal error, the goal is to “get baptisms.” Now that particular doctrinal error is the one we

have actually been examining in most of our recent studies in one way or the other, and that is the falsehood that “justification” is the end of the Christian journey, and not the beginning.

For those Churches who focus on “forgiveness” without “atonement,” the goal of evangelism is to get people into the doors. That is counted as “success.” For the true Church, getting someone in the door, getting someone baptized, is only the beginning of the work. The new converts have only just begun the new life. They are brands drawn from the fire, but now they must be taught to endure unto the end.

It is not enough, as Paul found out, to raise up a Church. Appointments must be made, contact must be maintained, and Paul would often visit his converts during his journeys. Again, this is what Ellen White called “binding up the work,” and it is an integral part of evangelism.

After we have “evangelized” someone, convincing them that we have the truth, then the work begins of helping that soul to progress in sanctification. There is the work of being as a spiritual parent, or at least older sibling, to the new convert. The Scriptures speak of older female members as “mothers” and those men who bring others into the faith as “fathers.” We have looked at the way the Family of Yah is structured in other studies, and the responsibility is a real one, and should not be understated or overlooked. There is a saying, “It takes a village to raise a child,” and that is certainly true of the spiritual family. The entire Body is keenly interested in the growth, development and health of its every member.

How we deal with success speaks very much of our own experience in the faith. And as we see this time as a call to go forward in a final work of evangelism in this world, let us consider how we deal with those who respond favorably to our words.

What did Yahshua do? He went forth at the beginning of His ministry and called together a group of disciples. The way most Churches teach their converts, that would have just about been the end of His direct responsibility toward them. “Let them sit in the sermons,” they might say, “and learn that way.” That was not a sufficient method 2000 years ago, except for the most basic doctrines brought over from Judaism, and it is certainly not a sufficient method in this wicked generation. Each soul needs personal attention – each soul needs individual training. And the beauty of the way the Body functions is that each member may receive this “training” while simultaneously helping others along the highway of holiness.

What did Yahshua do to manifest His responsibility toward those whom He had successfully called out of the world? He did not spend many years sermonizing them. Instead, He told them “Go here and do this,” and they went, and did, and learned that way. Each was appointed duties, and in the performance of those duties, they drew closer in character to Christ.

My wife gave me a testimony, for example, that she was very blessed by her work being responsible for the food preparations during the recent Feast. It sounds to me, from what she has said, that perhaps she learned as much from the performance of these practical things than she learned from the studies and meetings (not to minimize the importance of these either).

Brother Peter, we know, led some studies for what is probably the first time in the years he has been associated with the Church. You can tell us, brother, if this experience has blessed you or not, and I suspect it has. Would you like to share a testimony of that experience?

Peter: Yes. I have seen within my life that being willing to do the will of Yah, no matter what comes to you to detract you from your goal that he has set out for you.

As long as you give him the power to do as he sees fit for your life you will reap a great blessing.

I can say that from I have accepted the call that Pastor gave to me that I have nothing more than blessings and great rejoicing with great peace.

Zahaniel: Amen. And thank you for sharing that with us.

Adriel: Amen

Pastor "Chick": Amen.

Peter: I have found a deeper love for Yah and his words his people and comfort in knowing that we are secure in him always.

Zahaniel: Wonderful.

In fact, you know, I have suspected for some time that Yah would like to make a great teacher out of you. With the circumstances being what they are, we will all need to step into larger shoes, and I would like you to consider occasionally leading out in our Sabbath meetings, as your schedule and the plans of Yah for you in the future allow.

Peter: Ok.

Zahaniel: When I write these studies, to give my own personal testimony, I am greatly blessed. When I deliver them, I am similarly blessed. In both the writing and presentation of Yah's Word to His people, I often learn a great deal more than if I were studying for my own benefit – and I sometimes learn as much new light from my own studies as from those given by other members. Yah has put me to work, and it is a part of my sanctification process.

Yahshua said to His disciples, “Go out, spread the word, heal the sick and cast out demons.” We know more in this age than ever before about the “how” of doing all these things. What we need to do now is to go out and do them, expecting success in each act. What we will manifest now as a people is the practical faith that Yah has given to us at infinite cost. We all know what we need to do for the Body of Christ Yahshua. We have all been instructed by the Spirit regarding where we need to labor for the souls of the lost and dying.

We know how to deal with apparent failures, and we know how to deal with initial successes. We have been placed in the course of the necessary work for our time, and we are commissioned not only to convince others to agree with our faith, but also to *recruit* fellow laborers. In seeking not only “stars in our crowns,” as mainstream SDAs used to call it (to my mild irritation, even at the time) but in seeking brothers and sisters in the harvest work, we demonstrate Christ’s own love, care and responsibility toward those whom we encounter.

As we go forward, then, in this last mission of mercy to the world, I pray we will have many opportunities to exercise these principles in practice.

Are there any questions or comments before we close?

Elyna: No.

Adriel: No.

Zahakiel: Very well, Bro. Peter, will you offer the closing prayer?

Peter: *Loving Father we give you praise and thanks for all the things you have done within our lives during the course of this week. We are happy to have a Father like you and an elder Brother like Yahshua who knows our needs.*

As we move forward we commit to you Pastor and Bro. Luke, who will be traveling to many places with the message, and we ask that your mighty power rest upon them as never before and that your clear the obstacles that you see fit to be moved, and give strength and comfort where it is needed.

Be with us as we go through the rest of this blessed day we pray in the name of Yahshua. Amen.

Pastor "Chick": Amen!

Zahakiel: Amen :)

Barb: Amen.

Qinael: Amen.

Adriel: Amen.

Abraham: Amen.

Eagle: Amen.

Ruthline: Amen.

Peterson: Amen.

Elyna: Amen.

Zahakiel: I thank you for your presence, and let us move forward, praying fervently for one another in this very interesting time.

I will have the transcript of this study out by email very soon.

Peter: Amen.

Barb: Amen.

Elyna: Thank you, and Yah bless us all :)