

Forsaking All Others

Zahakiel: Bro. Abe, will you offer the opening prayer?

Abraham: *Our loving Father in Heaven,*

We are thankful to be alive and well this morning, and of a sound mind that we may hear the Word being shared this morning. Thank you also that we may enjoy the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and of one another.

Now, bless us with understanding that we may profit from the Word spoken. In Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

Barb: Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Pastor "Chick": Amen.

Adriel: Amen.

Eagle: Amen.

Elyna: Amen.

Peter: Amen.

Daphna: Amen.

Giselle: Amen.

Jaime & Maria: Amen.

Zahakiel: This month's study is called "Forsaking all others." It is a teaching that contains many concepts that we've probably looked at in previous studies, but never with this group, and certainly never this close to the close of Probation.

This phrase, "forsaking all others," is a line that is commonly heard in marriages as a part of the groom's vows. When a man takes a bride, one of the things he pledges to do is to "forsake," or disregard, all women other than his chosen bride.

In the religion of Yah, a priest is to marry a pure woman. That is, one who is not a widow, and has not had a previous husband. This is symbolic of the divine marriage between Christ, called the Bridegroom, and the Church, called the Bride. We all know the verses that establish this. Paul says to the congregations: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (2Cor 11:2)

This is a common expression to us in this age, but it was a new idea to the Church when Paul wrote this in his epistles. Of course, some would have realized the parallel he was drawing. The Church is the new Israel, who was called, in the books of the prophets, the Bride of the Almighty. (e.g., Ezek 16)

When Christ takes a Bride, He forsakes all others. He abandons them. He departs from their company, and devotes Himself to His Wife.

Groups who teach that there is only one way to salvation are always going to be criticized by those who are more liberal in regard to spiritual things. New Age theology (which can come in many forms) criticizes Christianity for saying that only through Jesus can a soul be saved. Likewise, nominal Christianity (which can also come in many forms) criticizes conservative groups such as ourselves, who claim (as the Second Angel of Revelation makes clear) that there is a correct way to read doctrine and that this particular group teaches it. In other words, they look with suspicion on any who claim to be THE Church of Christ Yahshua.

If any individual group should dare to stand up and say “WE are the one, true Bride of Christ,” they are condemned for their arrogance exactly as heathen religions denounce Christianity for the narrowness of their views on salvation in general.

Yet we need to be clear on whether or not we believe the symbolism presented to us in the Word. The Pagans at least have the excuse that they do not know the Word, and therefore are ignorant of (or do not accept) the words of the Messiah, who said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6) He said to His disciples, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.” (1John 3:1)

Christ says, “If you would know salvation, you must be wed unto me. You must forsake all others, all other gods, including the idols in your life that would occupy a higher place in your affections.” In return, Christ dedicates Himself to His Church, to His people. He cares, of course, for the others. He loves and would save every human; yet He is covenanted to His people, to save those with whom He is truly friends, and all others... even those who claim to be His, He forsakes.

If we believe the Word, we know that Christ will have but one Bride. Some have attempted to justify their new theology by saying, “Well, the Body of Christ is composed of many members,” and by this terminology, they reinterpret a verse from the New Testament, which reads, “But now are they many members, yet but one body.” (1Cor 12:20) Even by itself, that verse does not support the theology of those who would so misuse it, but the other things that Paul says makes it very clear what the intention is.

He writes, and this is a passage that we do not often cite in support of unity, but it is such a well-said portion of the Word: “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office.

“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

“Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.” (Rom 12:3-9)

Let me know when you've finished reading that posting.

Eagle: Done.

Daphna: Finished.

Adriel: Done.

Abraham: Done.

Elyna: Done.

Peter: Finished.

Zahakiel: That passage is the right setting for the “many members” concept. Paul is not speaking to every Church, or even every congregation, but “every man,” or every person. The many “members” are not little doctrinally diverse groups... nowhere in the Bible is such an alien theology found. The many members of Christ’s one Body are individual persons, each with different gifts (and a few are listed) but who are members of each other in love and in unity. Paul concludes by saying that the binding love between the members of the Body must be “without dissimulation.” What means exactly this: “sincere, undisguised, and genuine.”

The love of the members of Christ body must not be, absolutely *cannot be* separated by denominational boundaries or doctrinal differences. Now, both those things are important. Some may say, “If denominational boundaries are the problem, let’s just get rid of denominations.” “Let’s just sweep our differences under the rug, and all work and worship together. After all, I’m Christ’s and you are Christ’s, and who are we to judge, anyway?”

The solution to having many bodies (not many members, but many bodies) all claiming to be the Bride is not to ignore differences, but rather to be (or to become) of one mind, one faith, one judgment so that the differences do not exist. I want to talk, today, about how Christ recognizes His true Bride, so that He will forsake all others. But first, I want it to be established firmly in all our minds – members and non-members – that Christ DOES have only ONE Bride, and it is not a diffuse, mystical cloud of body-parts floating around, but a set of interconnected members, members “one of another” who bring different talents all to the same organized, blessed whole without disguise or hypocrisy.

If we believe the Scriptures, Christ will have ONE Bride. Many will claim to be that Bride, but there is only one. The Bible speaks of many false women, but only one Woman who stands on the moon, and is clothed with the glory of the sun. (Rev 12:1) That symbol had a great deal of significance to Creation Seventh Day Adventists.

There is only one Bride the Scriptures speak of, not brides as if they were many. And though some would try to wrest the Scriptures to extend the concept of members to other denominations, movements or groups, we have the words of the apostles that stand guard over us against the deception of this new theology. It is written, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” (Mat 7:15)

“For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye [who are in error] might well bear with him.” (2Cor 11:4)

One of my favorite verses... “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Yahshua the Messiah, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” (1Cor 1:10)

There are false teachers, there are false prophets, there are false doctrines, and there are false Gospels. Paul did not say, “Choose the Gospel that suits you best,” or “Find a Church where you fit in.” He said, “If anyone teaches something different than what we, the apostles, have taught you, you are to be rebuked if you follow them.” When Paul said, “If anyone teaches you falsehood, you might well put up with him,” he is reprimanding the Corinthians for being easy to sway from the truth. In an earlier letter (the quote from 1Cor) he encourages them to be in unity of thought and judgment. This is impossible if we accept multiple groups as somehow valid, for Christ recognizes His Bride, and forsakes all others.

So, before we get into how Christ recognizes His Bride, I want to make sure it is established in your minds that there IS “a Bride” for Christ to recognize and draw to Himself in unity. I want to make sure it is established in your mind that this Bride is an actual, single Church, one that has “no divisions” in terms of beliefs or doctrines, or judgment, or identifying names. One that is “perfectly joined together” in all that is eternal and spiritual, and not a set of “valid” (which is to say “good enough”) groups that may, someday, get it right and be ushered through the pearly gates.

Again, we are going to look at how we can, as Christ can, identify and recognize that Bride, but for now, if there are any questions about the first step, that there IS a Bride, and not Brides, let us deal with questions or comments about that now. It makes no sense, after all, for us to identify characteristics of the true Bride if we accept or maintain the belief that this can apply to more than one Woman. Our study will have gained us nothing.

So, then, is what I have said so far understandable, and do you agree with it? If not, let us come into unity on this matter according to Biblical principles. What are your comments or questions on this so far?

Adriel: I agree with what you have said so far.

Barb: I understand and agree.

Elyna: I fully agree.

Peter: I agree that no matter what man may say, there is one and only one true bride, whichever way they may try to put it.

Abraham: My wife and I agree.

Eagle: Your thoughts in writings are Bible sound.

Zahakiel: Very good, then. It is established among us in the mouth of many witnesses. Let's turn, then, to talk about being able to identify the Bride. If we believe that there is one Bride, and we should understand it to be a matter of our eternal salvation that we must find it (because Christ comes for His Bride, and forsakes all others), then we must believe that Yahweh has made it possible for us to know with assurance – assurance on which we can wager our very souls! – which of the various claimants is the right one.

Certainly, every Christian group claims to a) be the Bride, b) be one of the Brides, or c) be a part of the Bride.

Well, we can be certain that (b) is excluded as the truth from any who make such claims. The Word says, "There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph 4:4-6)

Just as there is one God, and one Spirit, so there is one Lord (Christ, the Savior, the Groom) and one Body (the Bride, the Church). There is one faith, and let me key in on something here. The Bible says, without any need for interpretation, that there is "one faith." Now, those who hold that (b) is a possibility, that their group may be one of a set of valid Churches, do not understand what this means. They think it means "I believe in Jesus, and you believe in Jesus, so we have one faith." No, that word, *pistis*, does not mean this, at least, not only this. When the Bible says there is "one faith," the word means, "Conviction of the truth of something." It incorporates the particular beliefs that attend the relationship between God and mankind, and this is often quite different from group to group.

But Paul says there is one "Body," and in his day, that meant one group of people. They may have been separated by location, but not by doctrine. And lest any say, "Well, the idea of congregations and churches has developed since Paul wrote that," remember the other thing the apostle said: "If anyone comes to you with a message different from what we taught you..."

Option (c) is also excluded. The idea that there may be parts of the Body that have different creeds and faiths is not taught in the New Testament, must be drawn from external sources, and directly contradicts the teachings of Christ Himself. In John 17, He prayed that His people would have the kind of unity that He shares with the Father. Can you imagine the Father and Son in disagreement about the nature of the communion service? Or can you picture them disputing whether or not there is true victory over sin for the believer? Or can you envision them agreeing to disagree about the nature of the Mark of The Beast?

Certainly not! Such a thing is an absurdity... it's actually offensive. And yet, we have groups claiming to be fulfilling the will of Yah actively frustrating the prayer of Christ by claiming that they can differ on such key issues, and yet be in union with the Son just as He is with the Father. This is foolishness that is hard to comprehend, much less justify... much less actually accept. But people do justify it, and they do accept it, because they have known no better, no more fulfilling, truth about the God they long to worship in spirit and in truth.

This leaves only option (a). They may claim to be the one, true Bride. They cannot legitimately claim (b) that they are one of a set of true Churches. That idea is excluded by the Word of God. They cannot legitimately claim (c) that their group is a "member" of the one, true, invisible and diffuse (spread out) Bride, because such a doctrine is foreign to the apostles' teachings and Christ's expressly stated will.

The only legitimate claim that a Church of Christ (to any degree) can make, is that they are the one, true Church of God. Now, a legitimate claim and an accurate one are two different things, but a Church that makes such a claim at least understands the marriage paradigm between Christ and His Bride, and that a group is either that Bride or it is not.

A Church must be bold to do this, in the light of increasing inter-denominationalism, increasing ecumenism, increasing "tolerance" for the beliefs of others. The true Christian does not wish to be

tolerated. That may sound strange, but it is true. Tolerance says, “I respect your beliefs, you respect mine.” I do not agree to such a social contract. Now, don’t misunderstand... I respect the right of others to believe as they wish – there is no force in the true faith of Yahshua – but I cannot respect the beliefs themselves.

I do not want my beliefs to be “tolerated” by others. That means they look over my beliefs, they consider them to be non-harmful, and they pass on, barely changed (if at all) from their examination. I want my beliefs to be accepted by others. I want my beliefs to change lives, to save souls, and to transform the world. Christ did not seek tolerance of others; if He did, He could not have spoken so directly against paganism, heresy, and hypocrisy in the leaders of His own (now former) religious group.

A Church will be perceived as arrogant, maybe even a little dangerous, if it dares to make the claim, “We are the Bride of Christ, and He has forsaken all others!” What pride! What intolerance! How can we get along with such narrow-minded people? It is clear that they will not tolerate our beliefs... how can we be expected to tolerate theirs?

Don’t be deceived by that word, “tolerance.” It’s good enough for preferences, but not for convictions. It’s good enough for people, but not for ideas. I love people of other religious beliefs. I tolerate them just fine (I don’t go around attacking them). But I cannot respect their beliefs – not if I actually love them. It isn’t their fault, they have been misled. They have been deceived, but I could not love my brother if I respected an aspect of his thoughts or beliefs that would end in his destruction.

Last Sabbath we had a little bit of a discussion on the nature of love. We, all of us who are being sanctified, are actually in the process of learning what “love” is. We are unlearning the love of the world, and learning the love of Heaven. The Bride loves the Husband, and the Husband loves the Bride. We who are Christ’s love those in the world, but we do not love the world. It can seem like a narrow line to walk, but we love as Christ did. We draw people to us in love, but we cast aside error and expose falsehood. That is the loving thing to do.

So, if we eliminate those Churches who make inter-denominational, non-denominational, and ecumenical claims (as the Scriptures teach we MUST, for the Bride cannot be among them) we are left with the bold, conservative and (to the worldly mind) narrow-pathed Churches. But this by itself is hardly enough – for there are many who make exactly this claim. How can we know which is the true, and which are the (often close, often fiendishly subtle) counterfeits?

This verse must surely be a comfort to those who have come to that point in their journey: “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.” (1Cor 2:14-16)

Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. We can know, in our spirits, if a thing is true or false. Now, be VERY careful with this! Some groups misuse this idea terribly. So do some individuals. I’ve had many conversations with Mormons, for example, who say, “Pray to God to let you know if Joseph Smith was a true prophet, and if so, you will receive a burning sensation in your chest to confirm that this church is

true.” That is their “test of a true church/prophet.” This is, of course, a reference to the New Testament, where we find it written:

“And it came to pass, as [the disguised Yahshua] sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, ‘Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the scriptures?’” (Luke 24:30-32)

The key difference from the Biblical doctrine, and the “test” proposed by the Latter Day Saints is the last phrase: “while He opened to us the scriptures.” If you go up a few lines, you read that this is exactly what was done: “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.” (Luke 24:27)

I experienced that burning sensation before in my own experience. It was when I was first being exposed to the Adventist message by a group of friends who were from the local SDA Church. They didn’t ask me to pray for confirmation that Ellen G. White was a prophet. They just opened up the Scriptures and testified of Christ. If the fire of the Spirit settles unto you while the Scriptures are being explained, and Christ (not some mere human being) is the subject of the discussion, THEN is the experience like unto that described in the Word.

As the verse says, “we have the mind of Christ.”

Remember, Christ is the one who recognizes the Bride. John and Christ have both said that the world does not recognize the Father and Son. Paul tells the Corinthians that the things of God are “foolishness” to the world. We must think as Christ does, evaluate and judge as Christ does, and then we can recognize the Bride. It’s as simple as that.

Qinael: My experience with Mormons has been very slightly different...

While the end is the same (pray for a burning sensation), they *do* generally read from what they call Scripture first, and use the burning as a verification of whether it’s “inspired” or not.

I wouldn’t necessarily doubt that it does bring about a burning sense. It’s written very poetically, and draws heavily on the wording and imagery from the King James, which “strikes a chord” in many people...

So I think it’s important to remember that it’s not just a burning sensation we’re going for here, no matter *what* subject matter is being discussed... It’s much more importantly conviction being met with reason and understanding.

Eagle: Amen.

Qinael: Mormons cannot provide a counterfeit for that, in my experience, or anyone else.

Zahakiel: Sure, those being the writings of Joseph Smith or some other prophet of their church. It’s the same idea... the difference is that it is NOT Scripture as the verses from which they draw this test reference. And of course, we do not use that as a test of any kind at all... that is just the right way to use THAT passage of Scripture.

As Bro. Luke said, the true test is conviction, reason and understanding. It is judging with right judgment, with Christ's judgment.

And, how does Christ judge? When seeking out the Bride, one must also get to know the Groom. Read the words of Christ. Pray to understand the doctrines of Christ.

Eagle: Amen.

Zahakiel: I understand that in the upcoming feast, the Gospel of John will be discussed. That is most excellent – John records so many of Christ's own words regarding the concepts of love, and unity, and doctrine... all vital elements that contribute to this recognition.

I was recently made aware of an article that a former-and-restored member of the SDA Church posted online who once studied with us. He has concluded that the CSDA Church is a false claimant to the status of Bride-hood, because our doctrines are false. He particularly takes issue with the most fundamental doctrine of our teachings, and the Bible itself, that of victory over sin.

I'll come back to that in a moment, and show the problem with that confusion, but let me just state that of the doctrines that we teach, the Victory message is the one that most directly contributes to the development of character. Let's establish this as fact by going back to the first marriage, which teaches us so much about CSDA doctrines:

“And Yahweh Elohim caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which Yahweh Elohim had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” (Gen 2:21-23)

Eve was made of the same “stuff” that composed Adam; bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh. They were alike. It was obvious... they looked alike, and different from the animals that Yah had also made. Furthermore, she could speak his language – they could communicate, and this is most definitely an integral element of any marriage. They were both intelligent, free of sin, and produced directly by the hand of Yah. In other words, their characteristics, their natures, were the same. As a result of this, Adam recognized the woman as his divinely appointed partner.

The Bride and Her Husband must be of one character. The Messiah recognizes His Bride because she has His nature, being made of the same spiritual “stuff,” and coming forth from the same Father: the Groom by generation and the Bride by regeneration and adoption.

We learn much from this first marriage that contributes to an acceptance of the CSDA Church's claim to be the Bride. We see, for example, the doctrine of the Godhead expressed in fleshly form. The Father and Son are One Spirit, yet a Father and a Son. The man and his wife were one flesh, yet a groom and a bride. The Union of Father and Son is composed of Two who share a common Spirit. The union of husband and wife is composed of two who share a common spirit. The doctrine of a Tri-une God of co-equal, co-eternal divine persons would make them entirely unlike those who the Bible says were created in the image of Elohim. The Trinity is revealed to be a falsehood – something known and understood by the Bride, because it is something known and understood by Her Husband.

The Christian's stand on homosexuality (to give just one more example of many) is also explained here. Of course, woman was created for man, and that is the will of Yahweh; but it goes much deeper than that. The Father and Son have distinct roles that are expressed in the relationship between a husband and wife, something that can never be truly represented in any other kind of union. The image of Yah, which He seeks to restore in some of His children through marriage, is further disrupted rather than made clearer if the pattern described in Ephesians 5, and first revealed in Genesis, is not followed.

And I will tell you, I have never heard a reason for the Bible's statements about homosexuality explained *anywhere* but in the CSDA Church with anything even approaching satisfying, logical doctrine. The other groups will just say, "God doesn't like it," or "The Bible says so," or "God made man and woman to suit each other both psychologically and biologically." That's all well and good, and certainly true, but we seek the "mind" of Christ, not just the discipline of Christ. We seek to know not only what is displeasing to our Father, but also the spiritually-based reasons why they are displeasing. The Bible tells us why, and the Bride makes it known to the world.

That may have been a little bit of a tangent, but it was not without reason. The Bride judges as Christ judges, and these doctrines, like the Trinity, like the nature of marriage as a symbol of the Godhead, serve quite well to reveal that as fact.

But back to this individual I mentioned, who attempts to explain the fact that he once called the SDA Church "Babylon" is because he was "misled" by the Church... He did not produce any scriptures to show where we had erred. He did not show where the reasoning underlying any doctrine was faulty. Instead, he said this: I believed the victory message, and everything was going well, "until... I sinned."

That was the reason he stated for breaking faith with the Creation Seventh Day Adventist Church. That, his experience, is his "proof" that there is problem with the doctrine, that doctrine taken wholesale from the very words of Scripture. His failure to be a faithful Christian is now presented as evidence of the Church's failure. The phrase "accuser of the brethren" springs firmly to mind.

And what of the reasoning itself? Well, it is based on one individual's experience, and contains logical flaws on several basic levels. For starters, it was *literally* "self-centered." It was *literally* self-ish. Selfishness, I have claimed in the past and do maintain to this day, is the purest form of Luciferianism. It is the religion of the Fallen One himself. This individual has made the most fundamental mistake that any novice Bible student can make: judging the Word and its doctrines by one's own experience, rather than allowing one's experiences to be judged by the Word and its doctrines. I have already related my experience reading commentaries on the book of 1John. Several commentators affirm that the original language of that New Testament epistle indeed affirms the doctrine: "Whoever is born again does not deliberately do sinful acts." And yet, it CANNOT be true, they reason, because the "reality" of Christian life reveals something else. Here the error, in all its terrible folly, is replicated. Yahweh demands our reasonable, our "logical" service, as it is written. (Rom 12:1)

The Bible was written to be our guide in spiritual matters. It teaches us not to lean on our own understanding, or to judge by our own experiences. We were not given the capacity OR the authority to judge the Word based upon the things that our senses indicate to us. That is backward. The essence of faith is that it is a trust in that which is *unseen*, so that, when it is revealed, we can know we have been

following the truth all along. We must judge as Christ judges, and then we can recognize His character in Another: in His Bride.

In regard to this individual I have mentioned, the problem was not merely accepting an error based on his own experiences. It was compounded by what followed. Instead of seeking help among those who actually taught the doctrine with which he was struggling, he sought solutions to his dilemma among the world and its counselors. He did not judge the Church, nor himself, as Christ judges... and so naturally, he could not recognize the Bride. Cause follows effect with terrible certainty.

Of all those who have ever departed from learning with us, this one included, I can't actually think of any who did so for a legitimate doctrinal dispute. Every time someone has left, it is because they STOPPED communicating with us, and instead went with feelings, doubts, in some cases rumors about members... exactly the same reasons that many followers turned back from following Christ during His earthly mission. As they have done unto the Master, so they do now unto His servants, as it is written.

Some, on departing, will throw a "proof text" or two, and do not ask for a response; they include them that they will feel a little more justified in departing. But in no case did they judge as Christ judges. They did not look at character. They did not look at testimony. They did not look at the sanctifying power of the message (the Victory message and the others). And so, of course, they could not recognize the Bride. Only Christ can recognize His bride. Only those with His mind can share in that recognition.

In conclusion, I would say this: Eve was taken from Adam, being made of his substance and with a character in harmony with His. Nothing less would have been acceptable. Similarly, the Church comes forth from Christ, being made of His substance – sharing His Spirit, and with a character in harmony with His. This can only be true if all Its members, acting as one Body, are of His character themselves. Salvation is individual, yes, of course... but Christ returns for His people, His Tribes, His nation as a united whole. Nothing else can be acceptable. Therefore, as we consider that Christ has chosen His Bride, and has forsaken all others, let us look at where the character of Christ: divine love and judgment in balance, a healthy outlook on the body, mind and soul, purity of doctrines and a firm understanding of the nature of the Godhead... there are so many other pillars of our faith, and fundamental doctrines I could cite...

But let us look at a people who are "bone of His bones, and flesh of His flesh" in a spiritual sense. We might say they are "mind of His mind, and spirit of His Spirit" perhaps? But what we know is that the Bride and Groom are of a like character, and the members of that Body, the many members of that one undivided Body, must be those who are actively seeking Christian Perfection, and claiming it by faith. They must be speaking of, acting on, moving toward, absolute perfection of character. How do we know that? Because Christ recognizes His own matchless purity in the nature of His Bride. When He looks into Her eyes, He sees His own love reflected back at Him, just as any groom would see in the eyes of his faithful and loving wife.

If any group that claims to be Christ's is not speaking of perfection of character, of victory over sin, of purity of doctrine, of rebuke and reproof when necessary – and encouragement and exhortation wherever possible – then its claim to be the Bride is false. It is not a people of His own character. Let conviction take hold, for there is a Bride to be found, one Bride awaiting the Bridegroom, and to whom the Groom

has given His express promise, that He will stand with Her for eternity, loving Her completely, and forsaking all others.

Are there any questions and comments as we conclude?

Adriel: Beautiful study.

Elyna: For the better... we heard the word more than once. :)

Eagle: I'm still getting to know His Bride. I'm not an Eve and/or created as she was... did she have a choice? Then you answered my question... in the Spiritual sense we are "bone of His bones, and flesh of His flesh."

Pastor: For Sheila... I have missed most of the meeting, so, what is the question that was answered?

Eagle: Did Eve have a choice?

Pastor: I am not understanding; can someone explain, please?

Zahakiel: She means, a choice to become the bride when she was brought to Adam.

Pastor: How does that relate to the teaching presented here?

Eagle: Would you explain that concept to me, please?

Zahakiel: What concept? The question was put to you as to what your comment meant...

Eagle: You were right in what I meant in that did Eve have a choice to become Adam's bride. The answer may or may not be related to the teaching presented. I'm simply looking for an answer. end

Zahakiel: Well, the portion from which it is taken is that Adam recognized his bride when she was brought to him.

Just as Christ recognizes His bride because they have a like character. That is how it is related to the teaching presented this month.

Pastor: Was there something in the study that intimated Christ's Bride has no choice (like Eve)? END.

Zahakiel: No.

Pastor: So, I remain "in the dark" regarding Sheila's comment/question.

Eagle: Before in the Spiritual sense "we are bone of His bones, and flesh of His flesh." I accepted this as the answer, just need to know where that is found in the Scripture?

Zahakiel: In Genesis 2, that is said of Eve about Adam.

Eagle: Not to my knowledge.

Zahakiel: I am drawing the parallel from there. I quoted it in the study. Gen 2:23, to be precise.

Pastor: OK

Eagle: Thank you.

Pastor: Did the concept of the Bride eating the flesh and drinking the blood of her husband enter into the study?

Zahakiel: No. It was about the recognition of the Bride by the Groom.

Pastor: I will benefit from reading the transcript.

[**Note:** He missed most of the study due to connection issues]

Zahakiel: <nods.>

Pastor: At the end of the first section of the study, you polled the attendees to see if there was agreement... Was this done after indicating who the Bride is?

Zahakiel: No. That was not the question in the poll. It was whether or not there was agreement that there IS only one.

Pastor: I understand... Was there another poll taken?

Zahakiel: No.

Pastor: I am assuming you pointed out who the Bride is.

Zahakiel: Yes, by way of the doctrines taught and the character identified in the study.

Pastor: So, did that conclude that the CSDA Church is the only and true Bride of Christ?

Zahakiel: I did say that this was the only Church that taught those doctrines, yes.

Pastor: Would it be reasonable to conclude that the one and only Bride of Christ (visible body) is the CSDA Church?

Peter: Yes.

Zahakiel: I would think that obvious, given the setting... but I didn't take a poll after :)

Pastor: Would I be out of line or order to ask for a poll on that?

Zahakiel: Go ahead...

Pastor: I am interested to know of those present if you agree or disagree with the conclusion that the CSDA Church is the only Bride of Christ on the earth today?

Adriel: I agree.

Barb: I agree.

Daphna: I agree.

Pastor: I agree.

Elyna: I agree.

Abraham: Agree.

Zahakiel: I agree.

Qinael: I agree.

Peter: I agree.

Eagle: To my knowledge, no other Church.

[A bit of a pause...]

Pastor: I think we are missing some yet.

Zahakiel: If you're waiting for Giselle's parents, she has to translate for them, and is generally a bit behind in terms of the progress of the conversation.

Pastor: We were suspecting that was the delay.

Zahakiel: Right.

Pastor: Oh, Bro. Abe, did Marlene have a position to take? She voted in the first poll.

Abraham: I should have said I agree my wife had left to care for an elderly lady

Pastor: I am sorry she did not have opportunity to take a stand on this part of the issue.

What I see here is a parallel to the question...

1) Do you believe there is only one true Body of Christ? versus 2) Do you recognize the CSDA Church as the true Body of Christ?

Giselle: I believe the CSDA Church is the Bride. I am waiting for [my parents'] written reply (the microphone is not working).

Pastor: Thank you for the apology.

Giselle: Maria and Jaime says, yes, the CSDA Church is the Bride.

Pastor: Ah, thank you. I think that includes everyone present, right?

Zahakiel: Yes, I think so.

Pastor: If Sheila would be willing, since her answer was unique, I would be pleased to exam her answer. (requesting permission)

[A bit of a pause]

Eagle: Thinking...

Pastor: Thank you for that apology.

Let me make some clarification here...

Anyone here is free to be “real.” Any person can freely say, “I disagree” without fearing some reprisal or condemnation. Anyone who is not comfortable can freely communicate that discomfort. Of course, we believe openness and honest discussion resolves all of those issues.

For example...

IF Lucifer had been willing to discuss his perplexities with the Father and His Son, he probably would have been salvaged from the fall. It is only as we open our hearts fully while trusting YAH to protect from harm, that we can grow into the full stature of Christ. I say this here for the sake of Sheila, but also all who plan to attend the Feast... We are not going to be listening to Pastor Chick preach very much...

We are going to be standing before YAH in judgment.

Eagle: An answer...

There may be individual's around the world who are lead by the Holy Spirit seeking the whole truth, so help them God, that are not members of any Church body...thinking of them.

Pastor: Let me respond to that...

Zahakiel: But if that is so... Oh, go ahead

Pastor: The world is like a desert...

People are thirsty, wandering around in the desert. They seek for pure water to quench their thirst. They find a watering hole and take a sample of the water. They like it or don't like it. Sometimes, they become ill...

If they are not satisfied, they look for a PURE watering hole. While they are looking for that place of comfort and purity, they are “water-seekers.” When they finally find the well where thirst is quenched once and for all, then they are no longer “water-seekers.” They have discovered where the PURE water is and will never go to another watering hole.

This is a parable of the true church.

Elyna: Amen!

Zahakiel: Right... what I was going to say was just along those lines as well. If someone is truly being led by the same spirit that is in Christ's Bride, it is inevitable they will find it. The problem is, those who are still seeking may often set themselves up to be “teachers of the Word,” and hence all the confusion.

Eagle: I was thinking of those who have not yet found a watering hole period.

Zahakiel: You were thinking of them in what sense? As members of the Body, but separate from us? We are talking about recognizing the Bride. You seem to be talking about those who haven't even found a Woman yet.

Eagle: You are right.

Zahakiel: So, then in what way did that thought influence your answer above?

Eagle: It is without knowledge of these souls, but I understand now the connection of searching and recognition.

Pastor: I think the real meaning of my "parable" has been missed or overlooked somehow...

There was a Samaritan woman that met Christ at Jacob's well. He said that He had water to offer her, and if she would drink it, she would NEVER thirst again. When one finds the true church, they find that water. They KNOW there can be no other water like that. So, I think that is worth exploring.

Eagle: Amen.

Zahakiel: Missed?

Pastor: "Missed?" Were you querying me?

Zahakiel: Yes. I'm just wondering why you said that :) I understood what you meant by the parable. But if some did miss it, of course we should look at its meaning.

Pastor: I think my recapitulation made the point such that Sheila agreed with some aspect of it.

Giselle: I understood it and my parents also.

Adriel: I did also.

Zahakiel: Right... but what I understood from Sheila's response was not that she didn't agree with the point of the parable, just that she'd let a faulty thought influence her answer? That is, we are talking about recognizing the Bride, but she was thinking about individuals who weren't even in a body yet.

Unless I misunderstood something?

Pastor: Her answer to the poll question: "Do you agree or disagree that the CSDA Church is the only Bride of Christ?" was this... "To my knowledge, no other church."

Pastor: I am not connecting her thoughts of individuals who have never found a church with that answer.

Zahakiel: Right, I'm not clear on that either. But I'm not sure what the parable does to deal with her response that she was thinking of individuals either.... So that's where I'm not clear.

Pastor: It was meant to deal with her answer (not her thoughts of people who have never found a woman).

Zahakiel: Ok. That's fine, then. I thought you were responding to her explanation, not the original answer from the poll.

Pastor: What I received from her initial answer was this... "To her knowledge" means the searching for water to this point has not indicated any better watering holes, BUT, she has not discovered the quality of the water such that she no longer believes there could be another watering hole with better water OR equal water. Thus, comes the parable. Sheila can be free to correct my interpretation of her words.

Zahakiel: Right. So then the parable was addressing the initial answer she gave. Ok, I understand that

So then, a good question might be, for Sheila, Do you believe that by further searching there may be a Church that does teach more truth, a more complete picture of the character of Christ?

Eagle: Your interpretations of meaning are insightful. I have discovered that the CSDA has the pure water of Biblical truth thus far... I am NOT searching for a Church to belong to.

I have found this true Church in the CSDA Church.. am deeply concerned about those who have not found it...why does it seem so hard to find?

Zahakiel: That's good to hear, so far as it goes... but I think (and pastor can correct me if I am furthering any misunderstandings) that what got the attention of pastor from the poll was that there seemed to be something "holding you back" from a more confident reply in terms of what you have found. Do you see what I mean?

It was sort of like, "This is the best so far," if you get my meaning.

Eagle: Yes, that was his interpretation.

Pastor: There is a part of the parable that I left out...

Somehow, before entering upon the trek through the desert, some fill a water bottle and take it along. They might sample a little water along the way at different watering holes; but, since they do not "need" any water per se, they never really drink at a watering hole.

Adriel: What would the "water" be that they took along? Their own ideas?

Giselle: Maybe their own conception of Yah's will for them?

Pastor: It looks like a practical preparation for a hot and dry journey, but it amounts to an "independent spirit." What YAH is looking for is trust in His provision without any of our own ideas and self-protection.

Adriel: Thank-you and Amen.

Eagle: No one yet has answered my question... "Why is the CSDA Church so hard to find?"

Zahakiel: Oh, I thought that was just sort of your own musing. Well, the answer is, love of sin. If those who have been exposed to it all accepted it, and shared it with those whom they knew, it would spread quickly. But what we find instead is resistance, doubt... people holding back from whole-hearted

commitments. And I think that is why your answer earlier stood out so much, because (to be honest) it did seem to be that way, even to me. If my understanding of your answer was flawed (because I think I shared pastor's interpretation there) I'd welcome some clarification. But those are all reasons why... because the world knoweth us not, as it does not know Christ.

Pastor: I would like to relate how Bro. Abe found the CSDA Church while living in Canada. He can tell the story better than I, but for the sake of time, and the challenges of typing it all out, I wonder if Bro. Abe would rather share or have me relate it?

Abraham: Please relate. If there is something to add I can.

Pastor: OK

He had never heard of the CSDA... Maybe you need to fill in the first part of how you knew about me?

Abraham: I didn't really, I had just heard mention of the name Pastor Chick.

Pastor: You began to pray for the Spirit to send someone to you... What was that about?

Abraham: Correct There were serious questions in my mind about the SDA church not doing according to the writings of EGW.

Pastor: Ah, and you prayed for YAH to send someone to confirm your inspiration?

Abraham: If they were the true Church of God, how could this be..?

Pastor: Abe was in British Columbia, and I was in Tennessee.

Abraham: Yes then I began to pray for someone to come. "Was I the only one who believed?" etc., Carry on.

Pastor: So, in a matter of about two weeks (as I recall), I was sitting in his house discussing the Bible (after visiting the SDA Church on Sabbath where Bro. Abe was head elder and giving the Sabbath sermon) we were BOTH amazed at the Providence of YAH. How could such a thing happen except YAH be doing it?

Abraham: Yes, amen.

Adriel: So how did you come to be in B.C?

Abraham: That is where I live.

Pastor: YAH sent me there.

Adriel: Ok, thanks.

Giselle: I have a similar testimony.

To make things shorter, I would say that anyone who is honestly desiring to find Yah's Truth and His Church will find it by Yah's providence.

Adriel: Amen!

Giselle: Yahshua said “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine...And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”

Zahakiel: Right.

Giselle: John Chapter 10.

Eagle: Somehow this body is not trusting my thoughts, feelings, etc., I’ve been told I’m “drowning”, “musing” , “faulty” All I’m hearing now is justifying yourselves for having left the country and not having the faith to stand firm in Christ and raise up your church right here in the US.

Pastor: Was the “not trusting” manifested during today’s study/discussion, and if so, what were the specifics, because I missed them?

Eagle: You are musing now, I do not mean to be disrespectful, but just be “open” and honest.

Giselle: I am recalling a Scripture, but I can’t recall the quote reference, where it says that in the way someone speaks (writes) or express himself, that’s the way how the heart of that person thinks really.

Eagle: Really?

Zahakiel: It seems you took offense to pastor’s question, Sheila? Your comment took me a little off guard, and I think it’s reasonable to look into why you said that.

Giselle: The purpose of sanctification is to self-examine, to see if we believe what we say we believe, because by our words we are expressing what we think. It’s a natural law, like gravity.

Zahakiel: Pastor’s question was asking why you felt your thoughts were not trusted. I don’t think that’s the case... what we are looking into is what holds you back from a commitment to what you’ve learned so far. We’d like to know what your honest thoughts are... and it seems you are beginning to share those.

Eagle: Just what I have openly and honestly expressed. After all that you preach, you all are not together here as a body of Christ together, united, gathering in the sheaves, sharing the Gospel openly...

Pastor: I think I recall at least one time reading that you wished to be baptized into the CSDA Church. What were the specific defects in the Church that changed your mind? Was it the complaints you listed above?

[A bit of a pause...]

Zahakiel: I hope that you’ll give a response to pastor’s last question, Sheila, but regarding what you have said thus far, we have never taught that the Church of Christ will be “physically” together in any one place for very long. The work of Evangelism would be quite stunted by that if it needed to be the case. The Gospel must be shared openly in more places than just the United States, after all.

The same thing happened to the apostles: Jerusalem was attacked, and they scattered. There is no attempt at “justification” in pointing that out.

Eagle: At least to me, a lawsuit should be no excuse for not raising up a true church in the face of adversity anywhere. It is contradictory to faith in God.

Giselle: Also, the CSDA Church has been in the U.S for 20 years, and the time for persecution already came.

Pastor: If what we were involved in was merely “a lawsuit,” I would fully agree... but the mark of the beast is “a lawsuit” of a different category.

In fact...

I just remembered that prior to the GC lawsuit, we encountered a lawsuit brought against us from the city of Guys and the mayor. We did NOT depart from our stations of duty. We actually won the case by the Hand of YAH because I testified that God was the One who told me to block the road (that they were claiming to be owned by the city.).

Eagle: If you had won the case with the GC, would they still be considered the “mark of the beast?” end

Pastor: Winning or losing in the courts does not determine what the prophetic fulfillment is...

It is the “mark of the beast” no matter who wins. BUT, when the GC wins, and the “sword of Caesar” begins cutting you, the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy tell us what we must do... Had we won, we would be continuing our work as always without the persecution of the SDA Church by the sword of government.

Giselle: Yahshua didn’t win Pilate’s Trial, why? Because losing his case was part of the prophetic fulfillment. However, the Jewish Church was disfellowshipped as Yah’s people when they turned to Cesar.

Giselle: The Adventist Church will continue to be united with the State, no matter who wins, as long as they use a Federal Civil law to punish their neighbors.

Pastor: Many have not read all of my writings at my “lawsuit website,” (maybe Sheila has not). BUT, when reading through the various articles, you find some truth that helps to understand much of the story. I did NOT “run away” from anything in the USA. YAH sent me to Rwanda on a mission prior to the court making any decisions about the case. I was fully expecting to return to the USA for a jury trial. It was all of the sudden when the court handed down a GC victory without any trial at all. Once I discovered there was not to be any trial in court, YAH told me to continue the mission in Africa. There was no reason to spend YAH’s treasury to go back to the US.

Bro. Luke was caring for the work in TN, and it was not until the court orders to take down signs, question members about bank accounts, etc. that things became a bit complex for the US membership. All questions about these matters are welcomed.

Eagle: One just need to believe that all in question is part of “prophetic fulfillment” and Divine intervention. Thank you for this study and your patience and understanding.... I must sign off for now.

[A bit of a pause...]

Giselle: A comment...

Zahakiel: Go ahead.

Giselle: My Father wants to announce that he wants to be baptized at the next camp meeting with Yah's Providence.

Pastor: Praise be to YAH!

Giselle: Jaime Alfonso Bautista Fernandez.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Barb: Amen.

Elyna: Amen.

Qinael: Great!

Adriel: Amen.

Abraham: Amen.

Giselle: Amen.

Daphna: Amen.

Peter: Amen.

Pastor: Two questions...

1) Will Giselle and parents be present for the Sabbath following the Feast? Baptisms will take place on that Sabbath according to what is now scheduled.

Jaime & Maria: Yes, Pastor.

Giselle: Yes, we will leave very early on April 15, Sunday.

Pastor: and...

2) For Jody...

Do you know (or have any idea) what Sheila's irritation and back-peddling is about?

Adriel: I am not sure, she had expressed some doubts, but thought she was going to email you about them.

Pastor: What were the doubts she expressed to you?

Adriel: She did mention the small membership...

Pastor: Was that all?

Adriel: For which, I told her remember Noah's flood; there will millions of people and only eight saved... She expressed some doubts in regards to your entitling your writings "My" this or that... just saying she wasn't sure about you being who you claim to be.

Pastor: Who do I claim to be (in her mind)?

Adriel: A prophet, messenger etc. She did not go into that, I'm thinking what I said though.

Pastor: What part did she not go into?

Adriel: Specifically what it was that you claim. I really thought she would email you with her questions though.

Pastor: I think if she were to read carefully and prayerfully my articles, she would have all of her questions answered.

Adriel: Yes, I agree. She just said she wasn't sure about it.

Pastor: In fact, the articles she did read, she would email me with great appreciation and testimony of spiritual blessings.

Qinael: Just a couple of observations, given Sheila receives the transcripts afterwards via email... I have heard "the small membership" cited as a negative, a cause for doubt, questioning, etc. more times than I can count. It's never made any sense to me. When I first began studying with the Church and learned it had a small membership, it served as a *confirmation.*

Every time I hear someone attempt to pass it off as a negative, I think to myself "Yes. Because we all know how many times in history the true Church has been in the majority."

As far as entitling articles "My (blank)"... I think that's more a side issue than anything, but something to consider regardless... Would it be more palatable to call it "My Gospel?" Paul was rather fond of that term.

Zahakiel: Right.

Peter: Yah's will be done no matter what men may say or do... His children will do His will, no matter what men will say or do also.

Zahakiel: Right.

Pastor, will you offer a closing prayer?

Pastor: Let us pray then...

Father in Heaven,

Thank you that you always answer our prayers. Thank you that we are always safe in Your care. Thank you for nurturing us in Your chosen Body.

May we continue growing in grace and knowledge until we are fitted for the home above. Bless us together in Your Holy Spirit, though we be separated by oceans and time.

In YAHSHUA's holy name, AMEN!

Barb: Amen.

Adriel: Amen.

Peter: Amen.

Abraham: Amen.

Elyna: Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Giselle: Amen.

Daphna: Amen.

Qinael: Amen.