

Zahakiel: Almighty Father in Heaven, we thank you for the blessing of these sacred hours. We thank you for the week that has passed, and its opportunities to draw closer to you, and to reveal your beauty to others. We thank you for your many gifts, and the ministry of your angels, that have brought us to the end of another week. We ask that your Presence rest upon us on this day, and that our experiences should be joyful in your holiness. May ears and hearts be open to the word which you have delivered unto your servants, for we ask this of you in Yahshua's name. Amen.

Adriel: Amen

Lucan: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Dominique: Amen

Gloria: Amen.

Barb: Amen

Naraiel: Amen

Elyna: Amen. Danielle: Amen

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath to everyone. Tonight's study is called "Inspiration and Freedom."

A couple of weeks ago, I gave a study entitled The Ghosts of Self. It is, I think, a very powerful concept if rightly understood; however, while it wasn't particularly complicated, it did tie together a couple of diverse ideas. In order to make it more comprehensible, therefore, I produced a couple of diagrams to illustrate its major emphasis. The diagrams were both "correct" in terms of what they were portraying. On the other hand, they did not make the clearest distinction between two important ideas, these being the awareness of Christ's indwelling presence in a newly converted person (which may be partial) and His actual presence (which always fills us completely). This was touched on in the words of the study, but was not represented as well in the accompanying images as they might have been. This was picked up by Pastor and one or two other Church members and, after a couple minutes of shifting things around, the images were much improved. I was very happy for the addition of the new information, as it improved the comprehension of the image, as well as allowing it to fit more perfectly into the text of the study itself.

As I was thinking about this during the week that followed, it struck me that this was a very good way of explaining the way that inspiration works. There are some people who believe that Yah's messengers are always impressed with exactly the right thing to say in terms of the message that He gives them. We would accept the idea that any message given by one of Yah's chosen speakers or writers is worth giving our utmost respect and consideration. However, this does not mean that the wording is always the best, or applicable to all audiences, or cannot be improved.

When Yah gives me inspiration for a study, I write it in my own language, using my own examples and occasionally drawing diagrams that express the relevant principle perfectly – as I see what Yah is showing me. In other words, the diagrams, words and examples perfectly represent my understanding of the best way to express them...but only mine. Usually, this is sufficient to get the meaning across in such a way that the brethren are edified, and perhaps given things about which they feel the need to consider further or commit to prayer.

On the other hand, while both the messengers and the audience are chosen or permitted by infinite wisdom, this does not mean that what is written or said is always expressed in the best way that it can be for others, or the general public. Things may be refined, edited, and made even better.

The Scriptures certainly operate in the same way. Three major examples that come to mind immediately are the recitation of the 10 Commandments, the history of Israel, and the events surrounding Yahshua's earthly ministry. There are also a multitude of smaller examples that may be found in various places.

When Moses first read the Decalogue as written by the finger of Yah, He said, in one place, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." (Exo 20:8) When the justification for the commandment was given three verses later, it was, "For in six days Yahweh made Heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." (verse 11) This is clear, and significant. We keep the Sabbath day holy because it IS holy. It is written that the Creator of Heaven and earth put a blessing on the seventh day of the week, and established it as an unbroken cycle through history, so that we might know which day is particularly blessed. This does not say that worship is restricted to that day, or that the other days cannot be very spiritually significant – but it is about the blessing. The Word tells us that Yah chose a certain day to rest, and to celebrate what He had made. We are invited, and instructed, to participate in this particular restful celebration, not on a day of our choosing, as if we could make anything holy, but on a day that the Almighty One has made holy.

So far, so good... and, Exodus 20:1 begins with, "And Elohim spake all these words, saying..." We turn then to Deuteronomy, and we read of Moses making a speech, and giving the deuteronomy, the law a second time, beginning thus: "Yahweh talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire (I stood between Yahweh and you at that time, to shew you the word of Yahweh, for ye were afraid by reason of the fire and went not up into the mount; saying," (Deu 5:4, 5) So again, we are going to hear what Yahweh said, and when we get to the fourth commandment we find, "Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as Yahweh thy Elohim hath commanded thee." (Verse 12) When we get to the reason for the instruction, we find, "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that Yahweh thy Elohim brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm; therefore Yahweh thy Elohim commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." (Verse 15)

Both the wording of the commandment, and the very reason why it was commanded, differ quite significantly. We've noted this distinction before, and it seems to me that the Exodus version is more likely what was written on the Tablets, or closer to what was written, not only because it was the Israelites' first exposure to it – and thus a paraphrase would have been somewhat inappropriate – but also because this was supposed to be a Law that Israel was to teach to the entire world. (Micah 4:2, Psalm 22:27) Thus, the justification would need to be as universal as possible. Not every nation was a slave in Egypt, but every generation of every nation was to remember the Sabbath, because it was made for all of mankind. (Mark 2:27)

Even for something as critical as the Decalogue, the wording of the principle differs from circumstance to circumstance. It may be that the stones said nothing but "Remember to keep the Sabbath day," and in Exodus Yah spoke one set of reasons, and in Deuteronomy He spoke another

through Moses. Both expressed the same instruction. Both conveyed the same spiritual truth – blessing, freedom, salvation – yet both emphasized a different aspect of the Law. The first gave it authority based on the creation of the world, and the blessing that Yah placed upon it. The second was more specific to Israel – the rest was a symbol of liberation, ceasing from the labors of their slavery.

We can all relate to the second reason spiritually, but it was literally true for those who first received it in written form. Each reading is “perfect,” and in fact even the order is perfect. If the slavery-based justification had come first, critics of the Law might suppose that the Sabbath commandment (perhaps like all the others) was given only to, and only for, Israel... and later on, as they expanded their territories, they attempted to make it universal law. While some do claim this today, they do so without justification, and quite the opposite is true in fact. Yah gave His universal commandments to a chosen people, and then explained to them why they should be particularly zealous for its observance. In each generation, there is a particular justification for the observance of each of the commandments, the Sabbath being only a convenient example, and if I was given only the basics of the 10 Commandments and instructed to proclaim them to a modern audience, I would feel quite comfortable explaining them in terms of our modern setting. Paul certainly did so. He said to the Hebrews, who were keeping only the letter of the Law, and not the Spirit, “You, who cease working on the seventh day, there remains a rest for Yah’s people, which you have yet to enter in, even as the Israelites entered the Promised Land under Joshua’s leadership.”

Today we might say, “Remember the Sabbath day, for it is a symbol that, not by works, but by faith in Yah, are you saved. “Not by your efforts do you cease from sin, but Yahshua has given us the rest, even as He has said, ‘Come unto me all who are weary and heavy laden.’ “The day’s rest is a necessary blessing for us to maintain the spiritual rest that is salvation.”

Again, this is just a ready example. The same may be demonstrated regarding the events recorded in the books of Samuel and Kings, and then again in the Chronicles. It is even more clearly seen in an examination of the four Gospel Records. Some were written with a Hebrew audience in mind, some were more suitable for Gentiles. These documents will sometimes describe the same events, but differ in the details, and present different perspectives. A critic might conclude that this makes the record unreliable. A believer would conclude that human language is being used to express divine principles as expressed through the world’s history – and that there is no conflict among the records with regard to Yah’s actual voice through the events. Even if the spelling, format, or phrasing differs, we can be certain that the same thoughts are being expressed.

This is how inspiration works. Yah gives us the thoughts, and we put these thoughts into speech, writing, and activity. He does not guide our fingers as we write, as in possession, but gives us the Spirit to write the truth. He does not move our tongues and vocal cords – He did not make marionettes out of flesh and bone. He made intelligent, responsible creatures that serve Him by choice, and do those things which please Him, even though they do “those things” their own particular way. This is also pleasing to Yah.

In my own writings, I have described things that my eyes have not seen, but that have been given to me through my thoughts. On a few occasions, I have written about things described in books written by Ellen White, and our wording has differed, as have our perspectives, and the details on which we have chosen to focus. In describing Eden, for example, I went into some detail about the locations of the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge. It did not contrast with what had been written before, but I recall a phone call on one occasion by a particular reader who was taking issue with the fact that my description did not essentially "repeat" what may be found in the previous Spirit of Prophecy books. From what I recall, the Bible (and Mrs. White) states that the Tree of Knowledge was in the "midst" of the Garden of Eden, while I wrote that it was north of the intersection of the four rivers. This individual, who was really looking for an excuse to disregard the other, more weighty, matters of which I wrote, asked how something could be in the middle of the garden, while at the same time to the north of a crossing-point of four rivers that I also described as being in the center. I had to point out that the Scriptures actually say BOTH trees are in the "midst" of the Garden, (Gen 2:9) so clearly it was not talking about a central pin-point, but a central area, and that both trees were at the center, one north of the rivers' intersection and the other south.

The Spirit of Prophecy books contain a number of symbols that were very meaningful to their author (e.g. the green cord stretching up to Heaven) but not particularly to myself. This does not mean I cannot understand and appreciate their meaning, although my words and examples would be different. Several books that Adventists understand to be inspired have been edited by individuals whom we do not consider to be particularly "prophetic." They were spell checked and examined for grammar and consistency by several people before being released. The editors did not have to be vetted for visions, or tested for spiritual awareness. They were, however, of the Body of Christ, and their calling at that time was to make sure that the language being used to express the inspired thoughts was adequate and correct. I understand that, in some cases, edits were made long after such writings were first produced, and this has been the source of some controversy... it is not my purpose here to examine these isolated incidents. Instead, I am confirming the blessing of Yah's freedom upon us – to know the thoughts He has given to us, and to place them into the world in a way that is unique to us.

This is not, let me be clear, restricted only to prophetic writings, or Bible studies, or any other specific thing. Perhaps Yah has inspired you to have a singing ministry, or to put up websites, or to hand out pamphlets, or to conduct services in your community for the poor. We would not expect Yah to necessarily hand you a list of songs, or a script, or the blueprints to the new community center. No, these particulars are left to us, to take His divine thoughts, and make them into material realities. We do not expect people to say, "Oh, but Yah did not tell you what songs to sing, so we will reject the songs' message of salvation." Similarly, we do not expect to hear, "Oh, Deuteronomy and Exodus both claim to be the words of Yahweh, but they differ, so the whole thing is unreliable and meaningless."

When we read, or when we receive a testimony, we are not merely listening to humans speak. We are listening to the voice of Yah through the words. We are letting the words affect our eyes, or our ears, but we are letting the Father of Spirits speak to our spirit. I do not want to belabor the point too much, but I want to share with you the blessing that this understanding can provide. It shows us how much Yah has given us freedom, and how much He truly values our individuality.

There are some, so frightened of making a mistake and losing their (fragile) connection with the Father and Son that they cling to wording very tightly. We have seen it with how some use the Scriptures, and how some use Ellen White's writings. Sometimes wording is important, yes, but for some, if it is not always said "just so," then it is gross error, the result of Jesuit infiltration, the very Omega of deadly heresies... And certainly, there is reason for caution. Satan is as subtle as he is ferocious... but greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world and its methods.

Adriel: Amen

Zahakiel: We must live in an atmosphere of trust, by necessity, for none of us can change the color of a hair from gray to black. There is much we can control by our decisions, and much outside of our influence. But if we dwell in Heaven, if we are resting in Heaven, in that which Yah has already begun in our hearts as a pattern on earth of the Eternal that is coming, we will not act out of a place of fear, not fear of making a mistake, and not fear of being misled. We shall read or hear a matter, and know when our Father's voice is in it. It will speak to our hearts, it will edify us in victory, and it will sanctify us toward everlasting service to Yah and our fellow creatures.

Adriel: Amen

Zahakiel: Because of Christ's love for us, we are one with Him, and the Father has given us His thoughts, trusting Christ in us to bring them forth as only He knows that we can.

Are there any comments or questions about tonight's study?

Adriel: C

Zahakiel: Go ahead.

Naraiel: C

Adriel: Thank you for this study. It is one I will be meditating on. End

Naraiel: Before I asked myself why this member doesn't do this or do that, in regard to impressions I received, and later I realized that only I had the impression in my heart or will to do something specific... that was Yah calling me to do what I was able to do, if I was allowed to see something. If I receive something, if I notice something, if something impacts me, then it is my opportunity to share it to others, if that's what the Spirit is moving me to do. If I am seeing or noticing a problem, then I must share the solution or a suggestion to solve the problem... in the world people always point out to things and complain about things, but do not mention a suggestion to solve what they are seeing. Perhaps it is because they can't identify Yah's voice thru other people's voices or counsel. End...

Adriel: C

Naraiel: I think it is beautiful to be able to identify Yah's voice in those ways. Even stones can speak to you, like Yahshua said. End

Zahakiel: That's very true, and I think that your comment highlights another take-away from this subject...and that is the need for communication. Since each of us hears Yah, but may interpret it

differently, it is only by communication that we can really hear a general and accurate voice at times. Hence, when "two or three are gathered," there He is. The saints must speak to each other as they plan, as they move forward with their inspiration, so that the Bride can properly bring forth the mind of Yah. Go ahead, Jody.

Adriel: I wanted to share this precious promise that goes along with what you said about living in an atmosphere of trust, and not fearing...

Naraiel: C.

Adriel: [John 10:27-30 KJV] 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any [man] pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave [them] me, is greater than all; and no [man] is able to pluck [them] out of my Father's hand. 30 I and [my] Father are one. End

Zahakiel: Amen. Go ahead, Giselle.

Naraiel: In response to your last comment. This brings to mind what you said about the limited perceptions we have of the whole picture which is why, the diagram you presented became perfected or refined providing a better picture 😊 thanks to the comments of other members. A church could be compared to a puzzle 😊, if it works in unity. End.

Zahakiel: Right. Are there any others with thoughts to share? All right, then I will ask Bro. Luke to close our study with a prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We are thankful for this lesson on the inspiration of your Spirit. Each of us has been given that Spirit by your promise, and thus, have its inspiration to share. We are blessed as we cooperate with your Divine agencies, preparing and cultivating our talents to best communicate what you have communicated to us. As we have covenanted our tongues and hands to your service, may we use them continually to your glory. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Naraiel: Amen

Adriel: Amen

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Barb: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Gloria: Amen.

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Elyna: Amen. Danielle: Amen.