

Zahakiel: Pastor, please offer an opening prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in heaven. We come before your presence with thanksgiving and praising your holy name for your faithfulness to us. As we gather in spirit and in truth, we ask for a fresh flow of your sweet Spirit upon us. In Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Elyna: Amen.

daphna dee: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Adriel: Amen

Naraiel: Amen

Barb: Amen

Gloria: Amen.

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath to everyone. This week, our study is entitled "The Presumptuous Sin." It comes from the passage from a Psalm of King David: "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression." (Psalm 19:13)

While the word "sins" is added there by translators, its presence or absence does not really change the meaning very much. Some Bibles will render this verse, as the KJV does, referring to "presumptuous sins," and a few others will have it read "willful sins." In either case, the actual word that appears in the manuscripts literally means that which comes from pride or arrogance. We know what Yah's Word says about this state of mind. Perhaps the most often-quoted passage from Scripture with regard to this is taken from Proverbs: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." (Pro 16:18) It is not, by any means, the only such reference. We may read, for example, "Yahweh shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things." (Psa. 12:3) In another place Yah speaks directly, saying, "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer." (Psa. 101:5)

Now, one might ask, "Why bring this up in the company of the saints?" This should be Gospel basics. After all, the Good News cleanses the heart from all unrighteousness, and surely none among us would say, "I am proud," or, "At times I act arrogantly." And yet, as I prayed regarding this week's topic, Yah showed me three things that were worth discussing.

1) The first of these involves the "narrowing road."

Almost by definition, those sins done pridefully, done presumptuously, are willful. The sins that are not unto death, those from which an honest Christian may repent and put away, are those that are committed in ignorance. If we did not realize that our words or actions

were sins, when we discover them, there is a "godly sorrow." We do not try to excuse our actions themselves, or their impact, in light of our ignorance.

Consider, for example, if you are walking along the street and, being distracted, you accidentally walk into someone else. It is natural for us to say, "I'm sorry," or "Pardon me." We do not avoid making an apology simply because we were distracted...instead, we take responsibility for the fact that our actions inconvenienced or harmed another, even though we did not intend it, and we are sorry indeed that this took place. Similarly, even if we are genuinely innocent of a sinful motive, when we realize that our words and actions displease our Father, we nevertheless repent, sometimes with tears.

Now, if we were legalistic, this might not be the case. If we were simply following the rules in order to "do right," then when we realize we have broken a rule, we may be upset that the rule was broken because it makes us "bad" or "disobedient," but that is generally as far as it goes.

On the other hand, those who love Yah and follow Him for principle know His character, and we realize that every one of His "rules" is there for a reason, often holding a deeper meaning than the surface reveals. If we have sinned, even in ignorance, then we may have harmed someone else without realizing it, or at the very least we may have set a bad example for those who are observing our behavior, and may perhaps have a more difficult time accepting the Gospel witness. For this alone, sin can lead to great sorrow, and therefore we do not take any sin, even those truly committed in ignorance, lightly.

As the road narrows, and as we learn more of our Father, we find that there are actually fewer and fewer sins that can genuinely be considered "ignorant." Those with a carnal mindset might say, "Well then, this means that if the road is 'narrower' it is easier to fall off. If you are responsible for more and more, it means that you are more likely to sin, and salvation is made more difficult." They might then conclude, "It is better not to learn that much about Yahweh, since He will hold us to a higher standard, and we may fall short of His expectations by sinning presumptuously." How difficult it must be for such people to be happy. If the God whom they worship is "out to get them" in this way, by more easily casting aside those who are closest to Him, then salvation must be a somewhat frightening concept for them. They are looking at the fact that the road narrows in a completely incorrect way.

The Christian, one who is committed to Yah entirely, is not near the "edge" of the narrowing road. If there are half-hearted souls, those who are trying to see what they can get away with while still remaining within the bounds of the Law (as many a legalist does) then yes...as the road narrows those near the edges will fall off. But those who are of a humble heart and a right spirit are walking in the very middle of the Way, the Truth and

the Life. It does not matter, then, if the road narrows to less than a needle's width, for Yah is holding us up, and is maintaining us on that infinitely thin path that is His perfect righteousness.

As the road narrows, it does so because we who are being saved become more capable of "steering." We can see further ahead through the lens of Yah's goodness, and we become more joyful, not more worried about departing from the course of holiness. We enjoy the life that Yah has given us, because we see, with growing confidence, that we are able. In Christ Yahshua, we are able, and He narrows the road as a testimony of us (not against us) to the universe, and says of us, as He has said of Job, "Behold my servants. That which the flesh would love is being taken away, and yet they rejoice in the goodness of my Love and my Law." What can the demons say against such a display? Where does pride appear at all?

- 2) The second matter that the saints may draw from a discussion of the presumptuous, willful sin is that of "Hidden pride."

Let me illustrate it this way...when I was baptized many years ago as a mainstream Seventh Day Adventist, it was performed at a local crusade, along with five of my friends. As most of you already know, the way I was introduced to Adventism was when one of my friends, who was very worldly, very crude of speech and manner, became converted, and had an immediate change of lifestyle. He began going to Church, speaking of holy subjects, and encouraging me to study the Bible with him. Being a non-committed Catholic, I resisted, but eventually his testimony won me over. I could see that he was sincere, and so I submitted to having him and some of his new Church friends come over and speak to me. They went over many subjects, including the prophecies of Revelation and as I listened, I felt a distinct "burning in my chest" as the Scriptures described, along with a growing intellectual certainty that what they were saying was true.

There are some Churches that rely on convincing people they are right with emotions and feelings. There are others that specialize in debates, and arguments, convincing the mind. Neither of these, by themselves, are complete. Emotion without reason is extremely unreliable, as even those religious traditions that are very deceived, and demonstrably false in their view of history, will speak of a "burning in the chest" when telling their prospective converts to ask Yahweh for a sign.

Reason without an emotional attachment might be more reliable initially...and yet reason alone cannot account for faith. It cannot lead one to "rejoice" in Yah's salvation, to marvel at His works, to experience the true "heart of flesh" that leads us to obey, not from a sense of duty only, but a sense of spiritual completeness. The truly converted know what King David calls the "joy" of salvation, and Yah does not wish to have a "marriage of

convenience" with His people, but a spiritual wedding that is cause for a universal celebration that lasts for ceaseless ages. We would not wish anyone to be involved in a loveless marriage, one that will last for only a few decades; should we wish any to be content with a loveless religion?

I bring up my early experience because I believe that, as much as I could without the unadulterated Gospel, I met Yah that day. Sadly, others with whom I was baptized did not. One in particular that I recall was the sister of one of the friends who had convinced me of the truth of Adventism. During a conversation that she had with us shortly after her baptism, she said something to the effect that she wished she did not have free will; that way, there would be no possibility of her sinning, and she would absolutely be saved in the end. This struck me as a bit "off" at the time, however I was not educated enough in Yah's character to really know why. It is obvious to me now that the reason it sounded wrong was because her statement did not come from a desire to be close to the Father and Son. It reflected no love of righteousness, but instead simply a desire to escape the penalty of the law. As you might imagine, she did not remain an Adventist, or even a professed Christian, for very long. Although it might not be obvious, this is an example of "hidden pride."

Ultimately, all who disbelieve in complete victory over sin attribute entirely too much power to their "selves" and not enough to Yahshua. It may be the case that few will go so far as to wish to be stripped of free will, but ultimately, those who do not believe in the Victory message must conclude that this is the only way to actually cease from sin. Should one believe that sin is possible after true conversion, it means that this individual believes that either Satan or the flesh is stronger than Yahweh.

The Creator wishes us to be free of sin, and also of external control...and has paid an infinite price for us to be so. The only thing He does not do is force us to obey, but if we do not believe that He is able to keep us from falling, if we have more confidence in our own desires than His (because this is what it means to submit to the flesh's promptings or the Enemy's temptations) then falling short is the inevitable result.

We must be, and remain, "dead" to self, having no confidence in the flesh and all confidence in Yahweh. When there is no pride, no self, then Yahweh triumphs in our lives. As the Psalmist wrote, if we are kept from pride, if we are kept from the arrogant act, then we will not be found guilty of the "great transgression," the rejection of the Holy Spirit, in the judgment.

3) The third thing we may draw from the Scripture's statements about pride is that there is actually a "Holy pride."

As I said in the first of these three sections, the narrowing road does not cause the genuine saints distress. The trials may be tight, but ultimately they are the source of joy because we become more capable. We become more confident as we unfailingly overcome. One interesting pair of verses that speak to this idea is found here: "O love Yahweh, all ye His saints, for Yahweh preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in Yahweh." (Psa. 31:23, 24)

Are we proud doers? Do we obey the Law because it is a duty, or do we rejoice that our Father has given us the perfect guides and guardians for our lives? Between the Commandments of the Law and the promptings of the Holy Spirit for which we daily pray, we are indeed kept from every sin and any least unnecessary suffering. How can we then have lives of complaint, of murmurings, of nervous anxiety? How can we not have lives of peace, of thanksgiving, and of joy?

We are to be proud, not of self, but of our Creator and Savior. We are to hold Them up before men, and They will hold us up before the angels and unfallen worlds. Through the Scriptures Yahweh instructs, "'But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am Yahweh which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth, for in these things I delight,' saith Yahweh." (Jer. 9:24)

We are indeed to "glory." "I have therefore whereof I may glory through Yahshua the Messiah in those things which pertain to God." (Rom 15:17)

"Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds." (Psa. 149:5)

We are to be "cheerful givers," (2 Cor 9:7) willing communicators, (1Tim 6:18) and thankful worshippers. (Col 3:15)

These traits arise – and they can only arise – when both open and hidden pride are eliminated from the life. The holy replaces the carnal, even when it comes to those things of which we are proud.

As I have said, those calling themselves saints will not have the testimony, "I am prideful. I willingly do things I know displease the Father." And yet, as the road narrows we may discover thoughts and acts that indicate a hidden streak deep within the character.

Considering what we have read tonight, we have a way to investigate. Are we cheerful givers? Are we willing communicators? Are we thankful worshippers?

If we are not joyful always, if we are not open and even "talkative" among the brethren, if we are not thankful for both the blessings and trials from the Savior, then there may well be pride somewhere...and it must be found and cleared away if we are to endure until the end.

Consider this light a great blessing for all of us, for none have yet been translated into the Kingdom of Yah in the flesh. We have things yet to learn, with perplexities and trials yet to endure. But if we will diligently seek out pride, and steadfastly eliminate it when we discover these traits that indicate its presence, then the perplexities will be fewer, and the trials lighter, on the strait and narrow way.

Are there any comments or questions about our study tonight?

Adriel: Amen

Zahakiel: If there aren't, then I will ask Bro. Luke to close the study with a prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for the blessings that attend our walk on the narrow road. We know that trials will continue to the sacrificing of shoes and bloodying of our feet. Yet with each new trial, we are blessed to rely more firmly and openly in Your carrying strength. May each of us find the joy in searching ourselves, and putting away any shadow of unbelief, fear, or self-reliance. That, when the time appointed comes, our weight will be fully vested in the vine that bears us, carrying us across to the Kingdom. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Gadriel: Amen

Gloria: Amen.

Elyna: Amen.

Adriel: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Barb: Amen