Reaching The Heart

Happy Rock: Loving Father,

We thank you for the blessing of the new moon.... In that you have given unto us this time for self-examination, and to recommit ourselves to you.

We thank you for providing a way of escape for us, so that we can have live anew and have it more abundantly.

As we come today to find out more about "Reaching the heart" may your sweet Spirit guide and direct Brother David as he gives this study.

Bless us we pray and may we be satisfy with the bread from your table this hour, in the name of Yahshua we pray... Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen. **Naraiel:** Amen.

Pastor "Chick": Amen.

Peter Jr.: Amen. Guerline: Amen. Eagle: Amen. Uriel: Amen. Adriel: Amen. Ruthline: Amen.

Zahakiel: This month, the topic I want to discuss with the group is called "Reaching The Heart." Continuing in the spirit of our recent meetings, I would like for this to be a more interactive session than our standard monthly convocations.

I want to encourage you, all of you, to share experiences as we go along. All of us have had a chance to speak about our faith, and even experiences from before we became, or began studying with, members of the CSDA movement, can be quite instructional. Today I would like us to go over a number of methods that we can use to get to the heart of an individual's needs without getting tied up in doctrines and beliefs. We can see, as we share our experiences, how these things have been effective, or ineffective, depending on the people with whom we are speaking.

At the same time, we can probably identify a number of errors that commonly pop up when people try to share their faith, and we can therefore avoid the mistakes others have made, or that we have made in the past.

The first of these, which I actually mentioned last time, is "verse spam." Verse spam, or throwing a lot of verses at someone and hoping that something will "stick" is almost the opposite of true evangelism. When Yahshua confronted the learned men of faith in debates and discussions, He did use Bible verses. When He confronted Satan in the wilderness, He used Bible verses. But... what is the common thread between those two?

Adriel: They knew the bible

Zahakiel: Right.

Both the Scripture "experts" and Satan actually knew what the Bible said. What Yahshua was doing was not educating them about what the Word said, but bringing it to their consciousnesses as a rebuke to something they were supposed to believe or accept. When Yahshua was teaching people who were actually willing to learn from Him, He used Bible verses very sparingly. What did He use instead of Bible verses when He wished to make a point?

Peter Jr.: Parables.

Zahakiel: That's right. Parables.

Yahshua used parables. He used examples and symbols with which the people were familiar to illustrate a spiritual truth. Now, does this mean He changed His methods when confronting the Pharisees and Sadducees vs. when He was addressing the common people? No, not at all. It only appears that He changed His tactics, but in principle, it was the same. In both cases, He used what the audience was familiar with: Scriptures for doctors of the law, and seeds, fishes, masters and servants for the unlearned.

In the Body, we tend to use both methods when speaking to one another. We use verses when drawing attention to a principle that has already been exposed plainly in the Word. As it turns out, though, as we progress in refinement we find ourselves encountering more and more subtle temptations and decisions, and we have to take those plainly-written principles and apply them in new ways. When this happens, we will often speak to each other in parables, often by email, to get our meaning across.

Another advantage that parables have, and this relates directly to what I was saying above, is that parables allow the hearers to consider a matter in new light. It gives them a new perspective on something they may already know on some level, but perhaps they have not consciously seen the consequences of the things they know. I will give two examples of this, one from the Old Testament and one from the New, and that should make it clear what I am talking about.

The first is this one:

"And Yahweh sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, 'There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. "And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.' "And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, 'As Yahweh liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.' "And Nathan said to David, 'Thou art the man.'" (2Sam 12:1-7a)

This of course is after David's adultery with Bathsheba and the betrayal of Uriah. Let me know when you have read what's been posted.

Pastor "Chick": Finished.

Peter Jr.: Done.
Happy Rock: Done.
Adriel: Done.
Ruthline: Done.
Eagle: Done.
Guerline: Done.

Zahakiel: Here is the second, from the Gospels:

Yahshua spoke, saying, "'Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country, and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

"And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

"When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?"

"They say unto Him, 'He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.'

"Yahshua saith unto them, 'Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Mat 21:33-43)

Let me know when you have read this passage.

Pastor "Chick": Finished.

Peter Jr.: Done.
Ruthline: Finished.
Happy Rock: Done.

Adriel: Done **Guerline:** Done.

Zahakiel: In both these cases, the audience (King David for the first and the Pharisees for the second) knew the proper principles already, but they had difficulty applying it to themselves... they had a "blind spot." And what the parable did was to allow them to judge themselves rightly, by seeing the situation from the perspective of an onlooker, an impartial third-party.

Hopefully you all see how this works.

Now the question is, have you had experiences like this? Can you share with us a time when you used a parable to help another person see something they had missed before? Or was there a time when someone shared a parable with you that helped you to consider something in a new light?

Feel free to share your questions and comments here.

Naraiel: If I think about it, I don't think I have received parables from other people, but Biblical parables.

Zahakiel: Well, we have used them in our writings to people outside the Church quite a lot too.

In fact, Crucified Afresh begins with a parable.

Do you remember that one? The two sisters?

Naraiel: Yes. Adriel: Yes. Happy Rock: Yes.

Zahakiel: This is an attempt to do just what I am describing above... to get people in the

Conference to examine themselves from another perspective.

Pastor "Chick": I was just thinking to add that one on the Club Adventist Forum.

Zahakiel: Crucified Afresh?

Or the parable?

Pastor "Chick": A Parable of Two Women.

Zahakiel: Oh, yes. I think that will be beneficial. I've been looking around for a place to post, and in the process been reading through the threads.

There are a few people who might be open enough to benefit from it.

Pastor "Chick": Ah. OK.

Zahakiel: Are there any other comments or questions on the above?

Eagle: Where in the Bible is this parable?

Zahakiel: This isn't a parable directly from the Bible, but it illustrates a point found in several

passages.

Ruthline: What Is a blind spot?

Zahakiel: A blind spot... that is a good question

There is a part of your eye that you can't see through, a spot you can't really see. But you don't know about it normally, because your brain will fill in the information from the things that you CAN see.

There are pictures on the internet that show you how it works, and you can look those up later if you are interested. But in spiritual things... the principle is the same.

We know some things about the Bible, and our brains try to fill in the rest. A lot of the time, however, what the brain tries to fill in is not accurate, which is why we need to keep studying and learning more.

Ruthline: Ok.

Zahakiel: And sometimes people are "blind" to what their real reasons for doing things and saying things are. But for Yah's people, we want to make sure that we are doing everything with a pure motive, and with perfect self-control. And so we find these blind spots, and we deal with them.

Ruthline: Thanks.

Zahakiel: You are welcome:)

Pastor "Chick": A simple example...

A person keeps Sunday for the Sabbath, thinking it is the 7th day...

They are BLIND to the truth of the Bible Sabbath.

Zahakiel: Right. They have filled in the gap in their knowledge with what people have told them, even if what they have been told is wrong.

Pastor "Chick": We can almost substitute "ignorance" with "blindness." If we are guilty of a sin and are "ignorant" of it, we could say we have a "blind spot."

I was thinking about my usual method of working with people. Have any of you recalled my methods of dealing with you? I am not so sure my program has followed YAHSHUA's method exactly. Though, maybe in some ways. It would be helpful if any others recall.

I am trying to remember, because I do not set out with a plan as such.

Zahakiel: Well, there have been a few times you have sent parables by email to Church members. There are a couple times I can recall where there were subtle issues being discussed.

And you tried to clarify the main principles by talking about things from a symbolic perspective.

Pastor "Chick": Ok, now I do recall some parables.

Zahakiel: Ok:)

So the first method is parables, and when dealing with individuals who either don't know, or don't revere the written Word, this method works better than the common error of "verse spam."

Another error that I see in Evangelism – and it often goes right along with the first – is assuming that a person knows his or her own needs. And since they are so open, the reasoning goes, it is obvious to us what that person needs as well.

I really doubt that the CSDA Church is going to have another physical camp meeting as an assembled Body before Yahshua returns, so I don't think I will be letting a big secret slip by describing the "bag on your head" exercise.

We have done this at a few feasts, but the way this exercise is conducted is that an individual will come and sit before a group of people with a bag on his or her head. On the bag is painted a very sad-looking face. At this point, we invite the audience to speak to the individual to try and find out why they look sad.

In a way, it is sort of a fun exercise, because we see individuals trying to psychoanalyze the subject, asking why they have such a bad outlook on life (since they can't see anything good in life), and why they are so depressed (since everything looks dark to them). Ultimately, it is revealed that the subject is actually doing quite well emotionally, and is physically fine, but they can't see anything good, and everything looks dark to them... because there is a bag over the head.

The point of the exercise is to find the right questions to ask, while at the same time not overlooking the obvious. This statement is very true: People will always tell you what their needs are, even if they aren't consciously aware of those needs themselves. The problem is, if we go into an evangelism, or counseling, or any other kind of person-related session, with a lot of assumptions, we are going to miss the obvious, and waste both their time and your own.

The solution to this is to really listen, to pay attention, and when you ask questions, try to draw open, honest answers out of them. You have seen a number of examples of the Church doing this, both with members and non-members. The difference is that a CSDA member has covenanted to going through this process, while a visitor can simply leave if they become too uncomfortable. We hope they will not, of course, because to live they need to "die" to the pride and self-justification that would tempt them to depart from the questions. Ultimately, we need to seek wisdom in asking the right things at the right times. We find that Yahshua... in fact, Yahweh has always done this. Even when sin first entered the human experience. The first thing Yah said to Adam after he fell from grace was a question, "Where are you?"

When we are dealing with sinners, we need to ask them what Yah asked Adam: "Where are you?" Where are you in your life? Where are you spiritually? Where are you going (as in, what are your plans)?" These questions get people to tell us about themselves, and as I said in an email to someone very recently, the more often we participate, and the more we share ourselves with others, the more our needs will rise to the surface. It can be uncomfortable if we are not used to having our needs exposed... but that chapter of A Sure Covenant that we studied last Sabbath, which was all about being open, should demonstrate just how important that can be. We've all read that chapter, so we should be on the same page where that is concerned.

We have a great example of this that we have already shared, when speaking with my Baha'i friends... they were going into great depth about the history and nature of their religion, and they stumbled over a question: "What about sin?" That is just another way of asking them, "Where are you?" Where do you stand with regard to the thing responsible for all human suffering and death? What does your faith say about a solution to this thing? What does Christ's sacrifice, which opened the way for us to be forever cleansed from transgression... what does that mean to you?

And Eagle... you have said that asking a lot of questions is how you've been communicated with in the past. Can you share some more of that experience?

Eagle: I have learned this from our studies. It has not been something I have done in the past.

Zahakiel: Well, hopefully you have been asked a lot of questions too :)

Eagle: It is coming naturally now, so I know the Spirit is leading.

Zahakiel: Good.

Eagle: Do you all think that the program of A.A. and mostly everyone's stories is the attraction?

Zahakiel: I'm not sure I understand what you are asking there...

Eagle: Has anyone ever been to an AA meeting then?

Zahakiel: Not me...
Pastor "Chick": Yes.

Eagle: Many get "up front" of the audience and tell their "story."

Pastor "Chick": Actually, A.A. is the next best alternative to becoming converted to Christ.

And, the facilitators DO try to get people to become "open."

Zahakiel: I heard somewhere that AA was based on some Adventist teachings. Do you know if that's true?

Eagle: Many do become converted to Christ through A.A. It is Biblically based.

Pastor "Chick": I heard that it was taken from Steps to Christ, but have never confirmed it.

Zahakiel: Hm, that would be interesting to look into.

Adriel: I have a question related to A.A.

Zahakiel: Go ahead.

Adriel: If we've been delivered from Alcoholism, by being made new creatures, is it or is it not ok to say "we are alcoholics"?

Pastor "Chick": Let me respond...

Zahakiel: Go ahead.

Pastor "Chick": That is WHY I said A.A. programs are the "next best" alternative to being converted or born again. A.A. (12 step programs) do not teach the gospel of Christ.

Zahakiel: Right.

Pastor "Chick": They cannot, because they must leave room for ALL religions. They do not know what being "born again" means, and therefore they teach a dangerous counterfeit. Many people really do believe those programs are Bible-based, but so are the fallen Christian denominations "Bible-based" nominally.

Unless we find the intimate relationship with Christ that is being "born again," we shall never overcome anything permanently.

I WAS alcoholic.

Adriel: Right.

Pastor "Chick": I am NOT now alcoholic.

Adriel: Amen.

Zahakiel: Good, yes.

And I think we do have to make a distinction between Biblically *based*, and Biblically *accurate*, because as pastor said, *based* can mean anything... it can draw a few points and claim that. But

accurate gives the whole story, such as where it says "Old things are passed away." If they are truly passed away, we cannot say "I am" something from our past.

Pastor "Chick": Amen.

Adriel: That is what I have always felt.

Pastor "Chick": Now, get this... I had to testify that I was NOT any longer alcoholic while still having symptoms of salivating when seeing a beer.

My flesh was still "craving" (at times) the taste of beer. BUT, that was NOT me.

Zahakiel: Right.

Pastor "Chick": The "Christ IN me" was NOT craving the beer. t was merely my flesh.

Happy Rock: Amen.

Zahakiel: Now I want to skip ahead here to my last point. I did have a couple more, but I think what I have covered is quite enough for the rest of our discussion, and I want us to get back to what pastor and Peter were talking about. I may cover the other methods next month, or next Sabbath.

The last one I want to talk about today is the most general, but it is also the most essential. Sometimes, when speaking with someone about the Bible, we are "challenged" on some point of doctrine. Sometimes it is worth it to discuss the doctrines for a while, to see where the other person stands. But often, the challenge is laid down as a way of steering the conversation away from heart-work (just as verses can be used as a barrier against self-revelation, as we discussed last Sabbath).

Bro. Luke and I had an experience like this just a week or two ago, where someone was asking about our beliefs. And I was happy to go into them for a time, but it became clear after a little while that this person wasn't really interested in seeking the truth, but sort of sampling what "other groups" thought about this or that. So, Brother Luke enters the conversation and tried to steer it into a more directly beneficial channel to this person. After a short while of this, he left the room. Now, you might wonder why I decided to share that incident, and not one that had a more successful outcome. The truth is, successful outcomes are precious, and rare.

Pastor "Chick": Amen.

Zahakiel: Everyone here is the result of a successful outcome. While it is important that we be convinced that the CSDA doctrines are right, that is not the reason we became members, or are currently studying the message.

Remember, two Sabbaths ago we spoke about this: there are many people who are convinced that our doctrines and beliefs are correct. You can believe that... we don't have a whole lot of members, but if you counted all the people who would testify that "The CSDA doctrines are the truth," you could fill quite a large area. So what is the problem? Where is the breakdown? The breakdown is that for many of those people, they have been unable to perceive the love that goes along with those doctrines.

And the problem is not with our approach, and certainly not with the doctrines or the message. The problem is that Satan has been very successful at redefining the word "love" for many people. You know, we could have a very good study one day about the redefinition of language that Satan and his spirits have been effecting on humanity. I'm sure it would be fascinating.

But Love, certainly, has been redefined... or perhaps it's never been defined well enough in English (or Spanish, or any of the more modern languages). This is why we resort back to the Greek words when we want to be specific: Eros, Phileo, Agape. All are good in their proper setting; the problem is that the settings have been jumbled up, and extremes have been added: obsession, excessive sympathy, sentimentality. So when we speak of judgment, and preparing for eternity, this is a high expression of Agape. If it is toward someone we know personally, quite a bit of brotherly love may be involved as well, and that's fine. But others, who are unable to discern true love, will hear only the judgment in the warnings, and not the love that motivates those warnings.

We have to truly care about people, and we need to be careful to express this, when dealing with others. There isn't one way this can be done... different people need different approaches, which is why I said that this last principle is the most general. To get doctrines accepted, to get agreement, we need to be able to show that the motivation behind our words is not to be victorious in a debate, or to be an expert on the writings of our faith, or to reveal how superior we are because we have "the truth."

Paul said he gloried in the fact that he knows Yahshua. That is wonderful, but how did he use this godly pride? He didn't sit back and smile to himself every few minutes for the rest of his life. No, he went out and he used that pride as a motivation to work for people who were often enough ungrateful for the efforts he was making. The pride of Yahweh leads us to love people as He loves people. That's a very important concept for us to keep in mind. And it should also give us confidence, because when we talk doctrines, or faith, or anything else, with others, especially those with different beliefs than our own, we are not there to show that we know more than they do. Hopefully, this will take some of the "pressure" off of those who are tempted to feel that they cannot be effective speakers for the Gospel. What we are there to do is reveal the love of Yahshua to a soul that is suffering from the lack of that love.

So the question is, how is that love shown? What does that look like?

Eagle: That's it.

Pastor "Chick": Well, let me make a comment...

Happy Rock: Ok.

Pastor "Chick": Anyone is FREE to be "excused" OR say "I do not feel comfortable with this line of questioning." Just because a person is a "member" does not REQUIRE them to give up their freedom of comfort.

Happy Rock: Amen. Zahakiel: Of course. Naraiel: Amen.

Pastor "Chick": We would HOPE that ALL members would feel FREE to engage us even with the uncomfortable issues.

Eagle: What about the covenant.? Won't it be broken?

Zahakiel: Ideally, we want that for all visitors too. Because that is how healing takes place.

Pastor "Chick": BUT, we are NOT "spiritual rapists."

Zahakiel: No, the covenant will not be broken by that act...

Pastor "Chick": That becomes "oppression."

Zahakiel: If someone routinely refuses to deal with his or her problems, and they become obvious to the body... that person's commitment to Heaven would naturally be called into question... but it is not a matter of force in that case either.

Pastor "Chick": Right. Eagle: Oh, that is a relief!

Zahakiel: I am glad we clarified that, then

Pastor "Chick": I knew you were itching at bit. You see, my sensitivity runs very deeply. **Zahakiel:** Yahshua said that they will know His followers by their love. There are some ways

that love is manifest in the believers. But it is the love that is the defining quality.

Pastor "Chick": "He that I love I rebuke and chasten." BUT, a person MUST KNOW that I love them and care for them before they will be OPEN to the rebuking and chastening.

Adriel: Right.

Pastor "Chick": Now, Eagle is relatively "new"... She said-- about one year. BUT, she has NEVER been in my personal space.

Zahakiel: Oh, this brings something else to mind... but go ahead and finish first:)

Pastor "Chick": She has only read what I write and discern what is being taught on a computer display, email, or other non-personal medium. Both Adriel and Eagle are disadvantaged in that way.

Personality will also affect this, because Adriel and Eagle may arrive at different conclusions when having the same electronic experience.

Zahakiel: Well, the feasts in general are a heavy loss.

Pastor "Chick": Absolutely. There is NO substitution for the annual feast days.

Eagle: Are you saying that because we have not met you personally, we are both at a disadvantage? And, why?

Pastor "Chick": Yes... It is very difficult for humans to bond without being in the same physical proximity. We are social creatures. We cannot easily judge others on paper or a computer display. We might have some good knowledge of what they share, but, there is really something vital missing.

Zahakiel: I am wondering if Eagle was asking, "Do you mean we are both at a disadvantage in terms of accepting the Gospel?"

Eagle: Maybe, both.

Zahakiel: Maybe I misread it, but that was what it sounded like to me.

Adriel: Or at a disavantage for trusting you?

Zahakiel: Well, it's certainly not the case that one must know any individual human being for that to happen. At the same time, this idea of physical closeness, and hearing the message spoken in person does make some aspects of it easier.

Pastor "Chick": Well, in context, it was referring to me and the church members, it seemed, but I like David's deeper investigation.

Zahakiel: After all, people traveled a long way to meet and hear Yahshua in person. If we are to reflect Him, the same would be true of His teachers in this generation as well This is what I meant when I said the feasts were a loss. One aspect of that is we do get to share thoughts, ideas, our "selves" in general, in a visual way. And that helps us to come into unity (trust, and so on, as Adriel was saying) much more easily. There are times when our members have been communicating by email, for example... and there have been some misunderstandings. So we call each other on the phone, or speak in person if possible, and we realize there wasn't a problem at all.

Text-only can't always convey our meanings properly. It is harder to "know" someone that way.

Eagle: It is absolutely astounding to me, I can feel your sincerity thru the micro chips.

Adriel: Amen!!!

Zahakiel: Well, the Spirit helps where technology is limited, I suppose :)

Pastor "Chick"::)

Zahakiel: But yes, this is the thing we need to share with others...

Eagle: Yes, this is the Holy Spirit!

Zahakiel: when we are speaking to them about our faith; and this is more important than any individual doctrine.

Pastor "Chick": Now, that MUST be a loving church if it carries through the micro-chips.

Zahakiel: Yes.

Pastor "Chick": Thanks for that one, Eagle!

Eagle: Amen!

Pastor "Chick": You know... my wife and I have been apart for three months or more...

We DO chat online. We DO talk some via phone. But, there is just something missing. And I don't mean sex.

Zahakiel: Right. I felt the same way when Giselle was visiting her parents for a few weeks. **Pastor "Chick":** Being in "real proximity" does something. That is one reason why the Father wants us ALL to be home WITH Him.

Adriel: Amen!!! (tears)

Pastor "Chick": Thank you for that, Adriel!

Zahakiel: :)

Happy Rock: I concur.

Pastor "Chick": You know... I have been trying to figure a way to have camp meeting once per year here in Uganda.

Zahakiel: That would be quite a feat:)

Pastor "Chick": If we could save enough money for everyone's round-trip ticket each year (hoping not too many years are remaining)...

Zahakiel: Right.

Adriel: I would be on that flight!

Pastor "Chick": Some could only stay for the feast, but others could stay and help with the project for awhile. It may be a fantastic dream, but YAH can make it happen.

Zahakiel: Of course:)

Eagle: Adriel and I could be baptized in Lake Victoria!

Happy Rock: Yes.. He can. **Pastor "Chick":** That is true. **Adriel:** Amen!!! (tears again)

Pastor "Chick": It would be a heavy expense for large families like Peter's. We really need to

pray for a wind-fall.

Zahakiel: Maybe you can offer a prayer for that here. We are about at the close of our

discussion, and we are starting to naturally get prayer requests.

Pastor "Chick": OK, shall we pray?

Dear Father in Heaven,

As we see the curtains closing on human probation, we pray for all who wish to enter the "ark of safety."

We pray for ourselves that we will fulfill your perfect will in spreading this Gospel "as a witness" throughout the world. e pray for Shiela's request, and for our Bro. Abe in his dark moment. We pray for Adriel and her family members. We pray for Sister Daphna, not knowing where she is right now.

We pray for Bro. Luke wherever he may be. We pray for Sister Barb as she is under a heavy weight of responsibility there in Kisoro (and with ONLY YOU to supply her needs).

Thank you for guiding and directing our meeting today. Thank you for the clear communications.

Thank you for reaching our hearts; for it is in the name of YAHSHUA, our Lord, Savior, and coming KING that we pray; AMEN!

Zahakiel: Amen Peter Jr.: Amen. Naraiel: Amen. Happy Rock: Amen.

Adriel: Amen!
Guerline: Amen.
Eagle: Amen.
Uriel: Amen.
Ruthline: Amen.