

Dedicating our Children (Confirmation)

This is something we'll be talking about for the next year or two our children being dedicated at a given time of their life, as they switch over from childhood to youth and from youth to adulthood. It would be a celebration like a Bar Mitzvah when a Jewish child becomes a son of the commandment. (There they get up before the congregation and read the Law, proclaiming "I am now accountable to this law; I am of age; it is binding on me.")

Our children are included in the covenant of Abraham. But later there will come a time when they come into the covenant by offering their will to abide by the covenant. The children who are procreated and circumcised are truly in the covenant. We dedicate them publicly and vow to train and lead them in the way they should go. Even if our youths are not baptized, they are still accountable for their actions.

Savav: As soon as they enter puberty they are accountable. They are able to reproduce and the consequences of their sin enter a whole new realm. I wish we could pray about how to treat our youth. They are neither children nor adults and often they are treated like children.

Our children are in the covenant because they belong to Yahweh. There is an initial dedication time when they are 40 days old. In the Scriptures adulthood is not reached until they are 20 years old. That's when they could become a man of war. We raise our children to believe, to trust, to serve our Master 100%. They are influenced by the role models ahead of them as well as their parent's example — how the parents give themselves.

Acts 16:31-33 — He and all his household were baptized into the covenant. Evidently the children were coming into the covenant with him.

There's got to be a time when they know they will come to a place to make it public. This is a time they can look forward to where we can confirm then. We are

always affirming them to bring them to confirming them that they are a child of God. They will know they are and that they have the Holy Spirit and act appropriately, just like we do. When they come to confirmation and stand before witnesses, us, we should never cast doubt on their salvation again. (Sometimes in talking to our youths we have said, "If you received the Holy Spirit at baptism...") Only if they do abominations, cursing God and us, would we doubt their salvation.

They were raised up in the way they should go, they will never depart from it. They were procreated children (some weren't, but our Father will have mercy upon us). We'll confirm them when they are ready. Our hearts will be towards them, and theirs towards ours. This will be graduation to another developmental stage.

Something is expected of you as a youth. Parents can reason with them at this stage — but not abandon disciplining them either. In China, a whole family might gather to discipline a disrespectful youth, but then they would also bandage and sooth his wounds. This is not what we would do, but for a long time that is why the Chinese respected authority so much. They had to live by their willpower. They learned there were consequences to disrespect.

Cephas: This confirmation gives them something to look forward to. They are coming to that stage in the process of becoming like their fathers.

This will add to our culture as a people. Our children can sense Him speaking to them. Samuel said he didn't know the Lord until He spoke to him. Our children need to know the blessings and curses of the covenant.

Adam: We've had this concept of, "We have to wait until our Master speaks to their heart." But it won't be a lightning bolt out of the blue. Our Master is going to be speaking to them through us.

Yachin: What is required of them to be baptized is an act of their will, not a feeling. They have to evaluate what they have been taught. They have to lay their hands on the sacrifice.

So what do we do when our children express their hearts? We must believe them. Our children have been raised to know our Master. They come to an age of accountability and give their wills over to Him. They don't have full appreciation for what they have, but they will come into it more and more.

Shoresh: Our children will see us excited and obeying the covenant. They will desire what we have but they will know they can't do it apart from Him. They will know our training is not sufficient; they will need His help. It won't be like the desperation of adults whose lives have been ravaged by sin. Our children's desperation will be deeper but not so dramatic.

When we baptize people, let's not tell them we are going to hold them under until they die. This has caused some to struggle because they know they didn't die. It's a metaphor. Let's put them under and bring them back up.

[After a break we had an extended discussion of our children, stimulated by what we'd heard.]

Kharash: Confirmation — I think our children need something when they become a youth to confirm them in the way they are going. It will set them free to express their desire for salvation. If their heart is to be dedicated, they are making themselves open to hear the good news. Our children aren't so tainted by the world, but they have an enormous reservoir of Adam. They need to hear from us that they are wheat and not tares. Our youths need to know the basis for what we've been teaching them.

Hannah Newsong: We've wondered about our young people marrying before they are twenty; does that make them an adult? But what I saw in the Scriptures was the phrase, bride of one's youth.

The world says there are fewer divorces for those who got married after they are 28 years old. Should we listen to that? (NO)

Korem: I've had a training group for two years now. I'm seeing them change as they are turning twelve. We need to relate to youths differently than we do to children. The more we show an interest in them, and invite them over to spend time with us, the more they'll trust us and open up to us.

Caleb: In our household meeting we wanted Amara to speak. Much pressure had to be applied, but she opened up to us. The way she expressed herself was good. She's no longer a child; in fact, she is given

adult responsibilities. But we haven't been confirming her. When she comes to us about our children we treat her like she was another child telling us something wrong our child did instead of thanking and appreciating her like we would another adult. We depend on our older children. More than anything else they need to know they are needed and loved. They need to be confirmed. Amara is bonded to the household now.

Hadashah: We need to explain to our youths why we deal with children the way we do. We need to give them understanding. As they get older we need to progress in our communication with them. If we don't listen to our children there is a gap between us.

Savav: The gap becomes of biological changes that happen, so to speak, overnight. They experience great emotional change, turmoil and self-consciousness. The key to learning to judge that is knowing where to turn. They have false ideas about being an adult. They think it will all change when they reach adulthood as if adults don't struggle. They need to know the reality. It helps them to know we understand that they are different. We must let them know.

These changes come upon them like a storm.

Oseh Shalom: We get intimidated because we forget that we were that way, too.

Savav: The intimidation comes because youth project so much insecurity and adults don't know how to help them or how to deal with what comes out of them. What should they do? Discipline them? Send them home? Talk to their parents?

Ma Aminah: We need to help people with this. Some people regard 13-year-olds as though they are only 5-year-olds. We can't treat them the same way.

Timshal: I don't know if people are so intimidated; they simply don't know what to do.

Kharash: Adults get intimidated because they sense attitudes in youth — that they are sulking, stormy, aloof, or dark — and they don't know what to do. So they end up telling the child, “You are intimidating.”

Adam: And that puts the guilt off on the child, instead of on yourself for being timid.

Savav: And then our children ask, “What is so wrong with us that people are intimidated? Are we so hard to deal with?”

Timshal: If our children open up we should go for it and not be afraid, even if we don't know exactly what to say. We must talk to them.

Intimidation is a work of the flesh. We must deny ourselves; we must deny our flesh or death will ensue. We must be led by the Spirit. Our children open up if they know you care about them.

Havah: This will cause us to be real with them.

Lo Nekar: When we repent to them for things we know we have done or haven't done, it draws them closer to us. If we don't repent, it leaves a mark in them that it's their fault when it was yours. When you repent it shows them that you care.

Havah: When we were at that age we had an identity crisis. If we are free and secure, we should be able to communicate, to confirm in them that they are on their way to being a disciple, that it is normal what they are going through physically, that they have no reason to be discouraged.

Lemuel: We need this. We are on uncharted territory. The child training teachings for 0 to 8-year-olds don't apply to 13-17-year-olds. It is a fearsome thing the way they challenge us.

Prisca: We really need understanding for this age. Growing up I was viewed as an angel. When I turned 13 or 14 I radically changed. I left home at 15 and I was named among the worst. Something really happens at that age. We need to really listen and ask for wisdom.

Elizabeth: They appreciate that we try to relate to them because we can't understand being a youth growing up in the community. This culture is not what we grew up in. We have to rely on Huldah, etc., who've gone before them.

We need to have a meeting with adults who grew up in the Edah with the youth now.

Savav: I feel what our Father has been doing with the youths here has come from the big child training teaching all the parents received. It has come from that section about our youths internalizing the gospel — internalizing the same truth that sets them free. What we have done has really helped them.

Ma Aminah: I feel like we need to watch out for getting others involved who will take the place of mom and dad. Our children could end up saying, "I need a special person; I can't talk to you (parent) anymore." He has given us the ability and adequacy.

Role models are very important. They can help children respect their parents.

Alma: "My mother's life was a closed book to me. I just wanted to hear if she went through the same things I was at puberty. Life overwhelmed me. My whole body was changing. I just wanted somebody to be able to relate to me. If we could just remember a little bit of what I went through. My mother continued to treat me like a child. I rebelled against her. When I needed her the most, she was far away from me. She was off into her work.

Oseh Shalom: Our children will grow up with far more vision and stability than we did because their environment isn't mixed up with the hypocrisy of this crazy world.

Savav: But our children have to have the freedom to ask us about the inconsistencies they see.

Yacheved: Yoneq told me a long time ago to write Tamar a letter. Now I do regularly since she is over in Sus. We're growing closer now than we ever did before. She pours out her heart to me and I pour out my heart to her. She is coming through this time because others are pouring their life into her. I'm thankful for mercy. We don't have to feel threatened by others raising our children. We lack greatly and we need each other to be complete.

We have a responsibility to our youth. They are our future. They are the strength we ourselves won't have ten to twenty years from now. Years ago we heard our children would grow and help us. Now they are growing up. We need to pour ourselves into them in appreciation. We need to love them. We have hope because we're in the Body where the restoration of all things is taking place. He is adequate and He is in us. We don't need to feel adequate in ourselves.

Cephas: (In tears) We needed the Body to raise our children. We're not threatened by one another since we are going in the same direction. The people in the households will stand by each other. That takes away the inadequacies of the individual parents. This is the only way our children are going to be saved. We are not a threat to each other.

Barak: Amen. Huldah is an example of the Body pouring their lives into our children. Naomi and I didn't have it. It was the same with Daniel and Hoshua.

Cephas: Parents bond with the people who help their children. We are one.

Rachel: Amen and amen. In the past I'd suffered being separated from our children. But I'm so thankful for the Body, for the brothers and sisters who stepped in where we were inadequate. Roi and I didn't have it all the time. Now we do. Our children call us abba and imma in reality. We are the Stem.

Yonah: Nothing ever reached my heart from my parents. The turning point of our relationship was when I told my mom I didn't want to go to church anymore. In high school my parent's relationship was shaky. I had no one to direct my path. If someone had taken me under their wing I would have gone with them. No one ever did. I was looking for someone. I hoped someone could reach me. I had a bad conscience.

I came to my Master because His Spirit reached me through the hearts of people. Our children will follow us if they know our hearts. We were raised in a world where for a man to express his weakness and be real was unheard of. They never knew what was going on inside them. We must cut off the false man and put on the real man. This is what our children want for their lives.

We are the Stem. We are chosen for His purposes. We need to pass on to our children vision of who they are and what they were created for. We need help to reach our children. We have great deficits among us. Other people have expressed to my children the heart I want to have. Our life is common. Our children are just waiting for that heart to be expressed to them.

We can't reach back to our deep experience of raising children because we don't have any. Very few of us even have a great deal of wisdom. But what we do have we need to express. We need to have hope and pass on that hope. If there is no hope, what are we doing? Without our youth we are nothing. When we feel intimidated and insecure we need to cast it out in the name of our Master. I've not had much hope for my children or myself — what kind of spirit is that? He wants us to be encouraged about our youth. They are wonderful people.

What is in our children's hearts doesn't just gush out of them, but they do have their moments. I'm thankful for every one of those moments because I see we're on the way of life. It is deep in our hearts.

We're the Stem. Our children may as well face this — their parents are failures. We came from a nasty world. We have scars. It has taken years and years of digging away the rubble to transform us. Our children respect us for coming out of the world. They want to be like us. We don't even know how to be like us. We must be sure we are here in the name of salvation. There's no one else on earth doing what we're doing. We've been called to be who we are. We were called and chosen to carry out His purposes.

Hakam: We might be failures, but we are not going to fail because our God is real. He's able to reach us. If He can reach our hearts He can reach our children's hearts. I have more hope for my children than ever before.

What our God has for us and our children is strong and weighty. What He has for us towards our children is so strong and powerful it is going to bring an end to the world. We receive life in us and it changes us. We can be heard and we can communicate. It makes me want to grab my oldest son and tell him what I think about him and how much I am for him. When I used to teach the older children, it was amazing how they responded. It gave me a taste for something and I want it to become an appetite. That something is what comes out of our spirit and touches our youth. *How much they mean to our God!* I'm thankful we're getting the mind. We are all going to have it.

Timshal: Our children have hope. They will relate to others like we never could. There are none on the earth like our children. We need to communicate to them who they are. There are many children out there who are wasted and not cared for. Our Father aches for them. Many are sheep and will come in the communities in the future. Our children will have everything they need to reach out to them. They will be able to do it better than we can.

Oseh Shalom: I was raised in those wasted places. Our children have an environment we don't have. They are blessed to be here. They have a childhood — I never had one. They have things they want to remember; all I do is want to forget my childhood.

Our God is going to do it. He's always wanted a people. He wants those children. He saved me so He could get those children. He said it and He's going to do it.

Derush: It was revelation to me that the nations were more worthy of the nations than we were of the Holy City. I couldn't grasp why we'd rule them. Then I realized I could not rule even now by my own strength. Now I know why He's chosen us to rule because He's going to be able to trust us and know we're His. We've suffered and gone through so much to change.

If people are afraid of children getting away from Mon and Dad because they have other adults they can confide in — it doesn't happen. Those young adults — all your children direct my children back to my wife and me.

Aquilla: (trembling, in tears) We're a chosen race, a royal priesthood. We've been taken of all the people in the whole world, chosen before the foundation of the world. HE IS GOING TO SAVE OUR CHILDREN! We've been known. I'm convinced we've been chosen to stand before Him and that we are going to be blameless — above reproach — holy. I want to be holy and you do too. The word says we've been called to believe and suffer for His sake.

I heard Savav. Our children do have questions. They are real people. We're going to tell the children who ask about why their parents couldn't raise them that their parents *loved* them. We need each other in the Body. Abraham is our Father. He agonized raising his children.

I have thought and thought about how the nations are more worthy. Well, we're not going to get into the Kingdom on our own. We are going to suffer to choose to use our own will to do His will. We can't do anything on our own (Phil 3:9). We'll be found in Him like Paul was, without a righteousness of our own.

Stop saying, "You intimidate me," to our youth. Take the blame. What could be in us to be intimidated and not help our children. We must go to them and love them. He's going to give us confidence for our youth.

Hakam: It was good what Derush said about in the nations and us ruling them. Great things are going into us. We're learning to trust our God. The Holy Spirit is taking us in a direction. Circumstances come and cause us to question but we're learning to trust Him — to go the way He's going and not let anything keep us from doing that. As a people that is how we'll be.

We don't trust Him until we relinquish our wills and everything to Him. Then He can work through us. That is why we are disciplined and corrected.

Hakam: He's doing everything to put situations in front of us to shatter our own strength and self will so that we can do the fundamental thing of denying ourselves. This will make us worthy to rule.

Look at the universe and consider how man is going to procreate our Father's image all over creation. The nations will never know our Father like we do — that personal relationship — but they will know us in His Son's image.

Obediah: Trust is to say our Father's will is delightful. His will is never delightful to our flesh. Once we've dealt with our flesh His law is delightful and His law will be written on our hearts.

The day will come when revelation comes. There will be a day of affliction for us, a Day of Atonement. We will afflict ourselves to share in His suffering. Maybe some of our children will go through it with us. It will be a 24-hour period with no food or drink. We'll be remembering the day He ransomed us and the price He paid for our atonement. We must do this by the Spirit; the flesh won't endure it. He said, "When I go away, they will fast."

Dreams

When prophetic dreams come we should read them to the households to get their interpretation. Then the household heads will get together to judge for each clan, then tribe, etc. We then read Yahnathan's dream about Hakam and Amaz. Whoever takes a child it is to be voluntary. They are desiring the child. It is their own choice. We don't want a stepchild situation.

We heard a letter from ha-emeq about a discussion of conscientious objectors at the responsible brothers' meeting in Sus. It is not in the same category as capital punishment. The Body will render judgment according to how their conscience is bothering them regarding military service. If a country is engaged in foreign, especially aggressive wars, then being a C.O. is all right. But if someone lives in a basically free

country where people's rights are protected and they refuse to fight an invader, they should move out. All in that nation should fight if attacked. Those who will not should not enjoy the benefits of living there. *THIS IS TN THE NATIONS.*

Our Children

All you have to do is look at your child, paying attention to them. *THIS IS ALL THEY DESIRE.*