

The Priority of Love

I would like to just share with you a little bit, from Rev 2, speaking to the community in Ephesus, just so that we can pass this on to others. We are here because we are able to pass on what we hear to others. On the First Day events you only go there to pass it on to the others who didn't come. Then the other half on the community goes the next week, and they can pass it on to you. This will keep us from ever falling into the Nicolaitan system, something that God hates.

The only reason for the first Edah is to show us the way they fell. We have to profit by what they went through. They didn't have the oversight, the benefit of having men like you to oversee the communities, who took the word from the apostolic centers to the communities. This means that they can continually be watched over and washed by the Word, taught by shepherds who care for them. Our Master was the Son over that house but He quit being the Son over *that* house because they lost their confidence, their *outspokenness*. But first of all, before they went off in any other way, they fell from the first fruit of the Spirit, which is love. They didn't love our Master as much as they did at first.

Rev 2:1-7 – You can see that they were still patient. They still knew how to reject evil and they still knew how to persevere. But their love was no longer fervent. Love goes first, and then after it everything else goes. If you are driving a car, and if you are patient with the driver who is poking along in front of you, then you can see whether your love has gone down. You can see whether it is fervent or not. In Gal 5:22 the first one mentioned is love, then the rest follow. When love, goes the rest goes.

If you are not patient, it is because your love is not where it should be. Love is first. If you have love then you will be gentle, patient, kind, etc., and have self-control. If you lose self-control, it means something has happened to your love. All of these, in this progression, are the fruit of the Holy Spirit. You can't fake patience long. We know that. Only those who endure to the end will be worthy of the Kingdom of God, if they continue to do the works of love they did at first (Mt 24:13).

So each apostolic center and its clans around it are the seven golden lampstands of Rev 1:12 and 20. Each clan is its own light, but together they are the one big glowing light of the lampstand. If the messengers don't go to that community anymore it is because the light has gone out. Then another community's light goes out, and another. At that point the lampstand is about to go out.

It could be because of the apostolic messengers. Then we would have to have meetings to find out why the lights are going out in the communities.

The apostolic center communities feed the rest of the branches. Ephesus had fallen from grace, which expressed itself in its lack of love. This is the first way a fall from grace expresses itself. You will know a tree by its fruit (Mt 7:20). The first fruit expressed is love. When love goes, then joy goes, then peace, and then patience. Patience is impossible then. The lack of patience manifests itself in reactions, which goes back to peace. You react because you don't have peace. It is like lights going out. Love is not shining, peace is not shining, etc. But as we manifest these fruits, there is going to be a great shining light in our regions.

Gal 5:19-21 – If anyone doesn't have the fruits of the Spirit, then they will not enter the Kingdom. Gal 5:22-23, and then verse 24 is the key to all things – denying yourself and crucifying the flesh with its passions and desires. Then verse 26 won't happen. Patience would run out really soon in Ephesus (Rev 2) if they didn't restore love. Only those who love will inherit the Kingdom. If you are loving, the rest of the fruit will come. If we could take that and go with it, then we could help others.

If someone lacks patience it means that love is not there, and our Master is not at the center of his heart. It scares us that we could be in that place, being leaders in the Body of Messiah. The entire ministry we do then won't cause a fire to spring up in the Body of Messiah – if we do not have love. All we do profits nothing without love (1 Cor 13:3).

Baruch – I was thankful for what we heard about the church at Ephesus... so how much do we have to heed what happened to the early church? Those verses (Rev 2:1-7) paint a picture of a church, which still has a measure of perseverance, which still has a measure of patience, but they had lost their first love. It was the beginning of the terminal illness of Ephesus. Loving one another is the key to everything our Father wants to do on the face of the

earth; indeed, in the Universe. I am really thankful we can be blessed enough to see the symptoms.
Sho'er – Another thing we heard about that was that in Gal 5:22 the first fruit of the Spirit is love. If you don't have love, you don't have anything. We talked about how what happened in Ephesus was that they had a measure of these things but they lost their first love. Mal 1:6-10 tells me that if I don't raise my children right, they are going to grow up to defile the minchah, to defile the altar.

It said in Rev 2:4 that they had forsaken their first love. That child that curses his father or mother, the light within him is snuffed out (Pro 20:20) and with time an entire region's light could be lost. I want to go home today and listen to my wife. I want to love her and turn my body to my children. If your wife respects you then she is going to do anything for you. I heard the other day that lawlessness and worthlessness go hand in hand. The worthless and the lawless say in their heart, "It doesn't really matter what I do."

And they end up thinking that no one cares about what they do. I want to learn from my brothers' triumphs and failures.

Hoshua – Only those who love will enter the Kingdom. There is a progression in Gal 5:22-23. If you find yourself being short with your children, your wife, your circumstances and your brothers and sisters – it is far more than being impatient. We can't just repent for being impatient; we have to find our way back to our first love. If we keep going on without doing so, we are going nowhere fast.