

THE BODY, OUR EARTHLY TENT

When we think of tents, we think of a temporary shelter used for camping, as well as for revival tent meetings. Although, large enough for many people to congregate, it does not provide the necessary features to satisfy our daily needs. In the second letter to the Corinthians, Paul makes a very interesting comment related to our body as a tent in this earthly home: For we know, he said, that if the tent which is our earthly home is destroyed, we have from God a building, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heaven. Allegorically speaking, he made the point that the body that hosts our soul and spirit is temporary and will be destroyed. Sin, the culprit of our eternal destination, has changed the direction of our eternal life as well as our life here on earth. Until Our Lord YAHSHUA came and freed us from eternal condemnation, we were slaves to sin and to the flesh, following Satan's destination-hell. While in this mode, there was no hope for us. The Apostle Paul cries the miseries of a non-generated body expressing hopelessness asking the question: O unhappy and pitiable and wretched man that I am! Who will release and deliver me from [the shackles of] this body of death? Then he answers, O thank God! [He will] through YAHSHUA Messiah, our Lord! (Rom.7:25b). This earthly tent is subject to all kind of temptations and torment of the mind. Without the atonement of our Lord YHASHUA, we are desperately lost. Paul said that the mind of the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit itself to God's Law; indeed, it cannot (Rom. 8:7).

Our earthly tent in its natural form is under condemnation, for no sacrifice of bull or any other animal to cleanse men from sin is enough; it is powerless to take away sins; Hence when He [Messiah] entered into the world, He said, sacrifices and offerings You have not desired, but instead, You have made ready a body for Me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings You have taken no delight. Then I said, Behold, here I am, coming to do Your will, O God- [to fulfill] what is written of Me in the volume of the Book (Heb. 10). Here stands the verdict that all who have accepted YAHSHUA as Lord and Savior and live accordingly to the Word of God, are indeed born- again and sealed with the Holy Spirit, Who guarantees their salvation; at the same time, they were given the right of sonship. God has become the Father of the redeemed by the blood of His Son, and waiting, we remain for the promise to be fulfilled, when we will be transformed into our glorified body. While in this body -tent, we groan for our freedom from it, for it is a tent of suffering. "Here indeed, in this [present abode, body] we sigh and groan inwardly, because we yearn to be clothed over with our heavenly dwelling. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under the burden and sigh deeply... (II Cor. 5:2,4a).

David, in his repentance psalm confessed his sins and acknowledged the spiritual estate of his life: Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; my mother was sinful who conceived me; purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow (Psalm. 51); Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there is any wicked or hurtful way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (Psalm. 139:23-24). This earthly tent is always in need of repentance and cleansing of sins. In our former spiritual estate we were lost and destined to hell, but thanks be to God, Who proposed our deliverance through the death of His Son and our sanctification through His Holy Spirit; we have been forgiven, purified and on our

way to heaven, where we will be dressed with our new body, where we shall see YAHSHUA and be like Him, according to the Apostle John's first letter chapter 3:2-3: "Beloved, we are now God's children; it is not yet disclosed what we shall be but we know that when He comes and is manifested, we shall resemble and be like Him, for we shall see Him just as He is, and everyone who has this hope on Him cleanses himself just as He is pure."

It is natural for us to spend a lot of time taking care of this earthly tent and everything pertaining to it, and neglect the eternal one, which is composed of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. YAHSHUA asked the question, what good is it for someone to gain the whole world and lose their soul? (Mark 8:36). Priority put in place is a must in every situation of life and most importantly to put God first in all we do and think. Life is short, very short for us to prioritize the tangible, which has nothing to do with our eternal future. We can't take it with us. As it is with our tent, so it is with all we have. The Lord YAHSHUA said, Do not gather and heap up and store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust and worm consume and destroy, and where thieves break through and steal; but gather and heap up and store for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust nor worm consume and destroy, and where thieves do not break through and steal (Matt. 6:19-20) Our Lord YAHSHUA assured the disciples that they did not belong to the world, reason why the world will mistreat them. He said, If you belonged to the world, the world would treat you with affection and would love you as its own, But because you are not of the world, it hates you (John 15:19); So, it is that we are hated by the world, because of our relationship with YAHSHUA. He said, If the world hates you, know that it hated Me before it hated you (John 15:17). It seems that persecution is a confirmation that we do not belong to the world. We must consider it a joy to suffer for our Lord. Peter said, If you are censured and suffer abuse [because you bear] the name of Christ, blessed are you, because the Spirit of glory, the Spirit of God is resting upon you. (I Peter 4:14). We must consider it an honor to suffer and even to die for the sake of our Lord and Savior, YAHSHUA. After all, we are citizens of the estate which is in heaven, and from it also we earnestly and patiently await the Lord YAHSHUA the Messiah, the Savior, Who will transform and fashion anew the body of our humiliation to conform to and be like the body of His glory and majesty, by exerting that power which enables Him even to subject everything to Himself (Phil. 3:20-21)

Focusing on the eternal future, Paul says, "If then you have been raised with Christ, aim at and seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God; and set your minds and keep them set on what is above not on the things that are on the earth; for [as far as this world is concerned] you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God; **when Christ, Who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory**" (Col.3:1-4). Born again, the Christian should hunger for the heavenly things; not for the temporal things to satisfy this earthly tent. As the letter to the Hebrews says, "Let us then go forth to Him outside the camp [at Calvary], bearing the contempt and abuse and shame with Him, for here we have no permanent city, but **we are looking for the one which is to come**" (Heb. 13:13-14). YAHSHUA warned us that if any part of this tent we call the body causes us to stumble and sin, cut it off and throw it away from you; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into everlasting fire; and if you eye causes you to stumble and sin, pluck it out and throw

it away from you; it is better for you to enter life with only one eye than to have two eyes and be throw into the hell (Matt. 18:8-9).

Paul reveals how the creation and we have been moaning in the pains of labor until now (Rom. 8:22b) and it will continue until we will be dressed with the holiness of God. This is hope that sustains us and encourages us to look up, to look beyond the circumstances we face; to look to YAHSHUA, the Author of our salvation and the soon coming Redeemer. My friend, do you have this hope and do you believe that it will be fulfilled in you some day? Our earthly tent is very much temporary. Invest your time and energy on that which is permanent and eternal. The reward waits each one of us who stays firm in the faith. For He Who promised is faithful to the end. Do you believe that?