

Advice to Elders and Deacons Regarding Procedure 1

Vero Essene Yahad

Jackson Snyder

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The Memorial Service and Introduction

Since we don't have a community assembly in which to preach, we start with places that we will have plenty of opportunities if we properly prepare. Those opportunities that abound are funerals & memorial services. You will receive opportunities here and again, and sometimes quite often, if you visit the proprietors of local and rural funeral homes, give them a clergy card and tell them that you are an ordained minister and are available to *speak* (not *preach*) at funerals of people who don't have a pastor or don't have a family. You may also do this with the chaplain's office at a hospital - but make sure you talk to a chaplain and get your name on their *approved list*. (See *How to Identify Yourself to Officials*.) You might also mention, if you feel the spirit move, that you are a student minister and are seeking opportunities to work on your public speaking and personal ministry skills. Funerals may *seem* to be a very difficult place to start, but in the end, you will probably find more support and encouragement in these than any other occasions.

(Another necessity is to learn how to craft then prepare a personal testimonial. A "testimony" should be ever ready to spring forth from your lips, and you will be ready because there is an easy formula for testifying that we will explain later on.)

Funeral / memorial services are easy if you don't let your emotions or fear get in the way. Chances are that the people who will attend will never see you again, yet they will appreciate you showing up. And you get paid to do it - not much - usually \$50 - \$150. The one who pays you is the funeral director.

These steps are how I do a funeral. They work GREAT for me. It's more work than just showing up, but if you follow these, you will make good friends no matter how you do. And you will find your Father to be well-pleased because you stepped out to rightly explain the gospel

1. The interview
2. The preparation
3. Greetings
4. Speaking a eulogy
5. Speaking a homily
6. The Order
7. The Graveside (sometimes)

The Interview

Most preachers skip this part, or they already know in advance the person being eulogized. But to be *very* successful, *this is the most important part* of preparing for the preparation. You will be happy you took this step when you are finished.

Obtain from the funeral director (or whoever engages you) a list of the deceased's closest people - friends, family, whoever you can find. Sometimes there is no one else, but often you can find 2 or three of these people.

If you can identify some people, set up an appointment with them a couple days before the funeral. Get them together in a private room. The funeral home will have a quiet place for you. Alternatively, ask the person who is in charge of the preparations if his / her house can be used. (This is good because you can thus get a feel for the surroundings of the deceased. Sometimes there are pictures. Often, doing this in a house adds familiarity to the surroundings and people get more willing to talk. If you find pictures of the deceased there, point them out. If not, ask if the householder has any pictures.) Let them know why they have been called together - for your sake, to learn about the deceased, and for their sake, to reminisce. *Find out each one's name and relationship to the deceased.* Say a short prayer, thanking Father for his / her life and for the people who are left behind.

Now ask questions: What about the deceased? What did he / she do in life? What was he / she like; what things (food, cars, activities, people, etc.) did he like? What are the stories about him / her? Was he a member of any community or volunteer groups? What did you like or dislike about him / her? Often, it is somewhat difficult to get the chatter going; especially, when the people are a little backward (socially uncomfortable).

But once it starts, it will keep going. Make sure to *take notes* (or record the session) and don't be afraid to ask questions. You are in charge. Include in these notes who said what, because you will want to use their names in the eulogy. Don't keep these people long - maybe 20 - 30 minutes. If they start engaging, then longer.

The Preparation

Go through your notes from the Interview. Put things there together to form a story. You will see similarities between some of your jotting. Make sure you note who said what. If you have been given some bad things about the deceased, you can turn those around positively. ("So and so struggled with this for many years, and now that struggle is over," for instance.) Here is a lengthy example from one of my sermons:

Raye Bedgood told me a little story that I checked into. I want to share it with you. Nearly a decade ago, a boy named Logan Mitchell was becoming a part of the family. Joanne came to know this boy and love him as her own. But then Logan lost his life in a tragic car crash on Back Beach Road.

The death of this child brought great grief to the whole family. But through it, the heavenly Father began to *speak to Joanne* in a quiet voice. Logan's life and death a prophetic wake-up call for her. In her hurt, Joanne began to reach out for *the joy* promised in Scripture – the joy that pierces affliction. She found Faith Christian Family Church and became very active in the service of the Savior for three years. Her church friend told me that, during *this* time, Joanne not only heard the words of life, but responded; she came to know her Savior and follow him – she was born anew.

On May 5, 2004, Joanne herself was only eight years old in Jesus – just a little child of G-d – just as Logan had been. My friends, this is a tremendous testimony of the Father's love, pity and foreknowledge. He took one family's temporary tragedy and turned it into the eternal salvation of another. Joy from affliction. Salvation from suffering. Gladness from distress.

Another great joy that pierces our darkness is that Joanne's sister Phyllis is with us today. The accident could've also taken her, but she received *a reprieve* so she might seek out the one who brings joy through suffering and salvation. Phyllis, through the pain of your soul and body, may the Holy Spirit guide you into full healing and paths of righteousness for Jesus' name's sake. If you will all heed this certain call, you'll "Be not dismayed whate'er betide – g-d will take care of you."

Yet another joy that we celebrate is that Joshua and Breanna were at home when the accident occurred, safe and sound. Both of these children are at the age of great resilience, and as long as they live they will remember their mother through child-like eyes. This is a great blessing. Yet they'll need a strong support base from now on. Church school is essential for them to acclimate to life without mother but with the Lord Jesus who bid your children to come unto him.

Another bright spot is that Stephan, a young man, has enjoyed two decades of what he described as love, closeness and protection with his mother. He may now call on his memory of these many good years with her – to help set his life on course – to accept *his high calling in Christ*.

Finally, I want to mention that Phyllis described her sister as an "angel that got her wings." I heard from several of the family members that Joanne was a very loving and helpful person – an angel of mercy – who would do anything she could for anyone. Joanne was an affectionate person – "a hugger" someone said – a woman who in many ways emulated the loving traits of her Savior.

I'm thinking maybe Joanne's temperament is the greatest symbol of that Christ-likeness she possessed – the most telling sign of her salvation – a *symbol* and a *sign* for us here today, that we must take care to seek out the root source of her joy. May the memory of her loveliness help all of you who cared for her to also remember the loveliness of her Savior. And just as Logan Mitchell's death prompted Joanne to eventually open the door of her heart to the Savior, may she, through her memory, encourage

Lengthy, yes. But it is an extended example. And you can do the same if you will put yourself in the place of the deceased while you compose these stories, and you will

want to eventually type everything you do up, as I will explain later.

The Greetings

When you get to the place of the funeral, you will already know the people you interviewed. Hang out with one of those people, the one you feel most comfortable with, and perhaps that person will introduce you to others he / she is greeting. You may say upon introduction something like, “Sorry for your loss” or “Condolences.” These are trite sayings - think up a better way to show a little respect and remorse. You will perhaps also here a thing or two about the deceased that you can use in the message. Greet who you may.

If there is an open casket, you may also stand to the side of it and bless the people who come. This is the time you need something to identify you as clergy, rather than have the people see you as some stranger hanging out around the deceased. A clergy shirt and collar may be purchased online for about \$35, and if you are going to make public appearances, I suggest, no matter how you feel about it, to use this identifier. A prayer shawl and tzitziyot will not do for this unless the family is Jewish, and it is doubtful if you will get any services for Jews. They have their own funeral homes and rabbis.

Clerical Garb

There are several collar styles and colors for clerical garb. For the ordained, deacon is gray, elder is black (or any color), bishop is purple; or wear what looks best. I was an itinerant ordained Deacon in the church; I thought gray looked best, and that’s what I wore. There are two collar styles: Anglican (collar extends all around the neck) and Roman (with the square in the front). Alternatively, some kind of suit with a religious necklace (maybe with a cross or some other identification). (There are also very nice Messianic wear.) If you are pointed out as a clergy person, you will get known, and you will receive opportunities. (Check the internet for various inexpensive styles.) Personally, I wore the Roman collar for weddings, funerals and other “official” stuff. I also wore a kippah, tallit, chatan and linen for scriptural holidays when in a formal situation, like Pesach.



As for coming and going at the beginning and end of the service, the funeral director will tell you what to do. If there is a casket, the clergy person normally will follow the pall-bearers out and ride in the hearse, perhaps with a family member.

If there are no relatives, then the funeral, if there even is one, will be very informal. Don't worry about it in that case. Nevertheless, you will want to do as good a job as you can and prepare everything in writing because you may use the message you are preaching over and over again.

Speaking the Eulogy

Eulogy means "good word." Often after the information about the deceased is read from the lectern, then eulogy comes next, and you may use your prepared notes or manuscript from the interview(s) to praise (insofar as you can) the deceased. Never over-praise. Never bring your own experience into the eulogy (unless it was your experience from the interview.) Mention the names of the friends and relatives and relate what they told you in a refined way. This should take about 10 minutes.

Sometimes the minister will invite the attendees to stand up and talk a little about the deceased. Caution! If this is desirable, have a few people *prepared* ahead of time, and let them know that they have two minutes. Of course, what could happen unless this is prepared is someone getting up and giving a long and teary lecture. Also, someone may get up, often a relative with a grudge, and offend everyone with personal information about the speaker's relationship with the deceased. Although having a couple people stand up is often a very good thing, it can go hopelessly wrong, and you will lose control of the service.

In the last funeral I attended, the son of the deceased was chosen to do the funeral because he was the "family preacher." This son railed against his father, and his speech included snide remarks and hurtful remembrances. Always work toward professionalism and don't let the enemy get a foothold. Funerals are a good minister's very best opportunities to witness to the love and care of the Father. But you see what I came away with from that funeral - all I remember was that the deceased's son really didn't like him, and in a backhanded way, he wanted every to know it.

Preparing and Speaking the Homily

The definition of homily is (usually) a short discourse often on a religious subject. The word comes from Greek (*homilos* = *crowd*) and ecclesiastical Latin (*homilia* = *sermon to a crowd*). Yet a homily is often thought of as shorter than a full-blown sermon.

For the time being, you only need one funeral homily, and it of necessity needs to be short. If you take 10 minutes in the eulogy, another 15 or 20 minutes on the sermon is plenty. Most people can't track any longer than that. You can actually find a good sermon online if you are new, a sermon to persuade (but only mildly unless the anointing is strong) that you can rewrite and make it your own. This is the "lazy preacher's" way, and most can tell a canned sermon when they hear it.

The purpose of the homily is not to minister to a dead person, but to those who have taken the time to be your crowd. Consider how they might feel: sad, abandoned, dismayed; considering the possibility of their own death. To such you must preach the *gospel*, but *how you preach* it is going to make a huge difference to both the people there and to you when you finish.

Like your eulogy, you will want to manuscript your homily - write it all down - word for word - or at very least, make yourself notes that you can follow easily. And once you do, you are going to want to practice so that your reading is not that evident. (My first preaching teacher said to not only manuscript everything you preach, but *memorize* it before you preach it! I simply couldn't do the second, but I could do the first, and now I am very thankful to have had that fellow as a teacher because I have hundreds of sermons now to choose from. Once a sermon is rightly crafted, and that preparation is anointed, when you pull it back out years later you will have it word-for-word; and when you speak it again, the original anointing will once again be evident.)

Sermon Preparation

{Sermon Prep 1} There is a basic sermon preparation plan for beginners, and there is the easy way and the anointed way. The easy way is to take a message off the internet or out of a magazine and add your own style. The anointed way is the right way to go. *You start with the text appropriate for the occasion* - just a few verses is all that's necessary. You then read it thoroughly, then read it again and yet again. Let it sink into you.

{Sermon Prep 2} Even secular people expect you to have something from heaven for them. So you need to fulfill their expectations. Take your text up to the throneroom with you; arise, and go up. Set the text before your Father at the foot of the throne and ask him what he wants you to do with it. He may replace it! Stay up there as you study it through - and you will need a private place with no interruptions for this. Do not use your physical mind full of ideas; await the Father's interpretation. For this you must *meditate on your text during the next day or two - or 5 days* if you have that much time. The Father's ideas for the text will eventually dawn on you like the rain falls.

{Sermon Prep 3} What three points or focii are to be found in the text? Here is an example of a text occasionally used for a funeral.

John 16: (KJV)

⁴ {Jesus said} But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

⁵ But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

⁶ But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

⁷ Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

Point 1 might be: Jesus informed his friends that he had to go away. (Everyone eventually goes away.) *Point 2 might be:* The friends were sorrowful. (Sorrowful not unlike you who are here today to remember so and so's life.) *Point 3 might be:* But had

he not gone away, something better, more universal, more powerful, might be sent. (Just a suggestion. Off the top of my head.)

Flesh these points out. Personalize them for the crowd and about the deceased. This little text has extraordinary possibilities as long as the Spirit takes charge of your preparation.

What is needed next is an introductory paragraph: “We are here to celebrate the life of so and so, etc. etc. etc.” and a persuasive, convicting ending; often a challenge, a poem, a prayer, song lyrics, or illustration (like the “keep your fork” illustration from my sermon last Shabbat). 10 - 15 minutes of this, and your done.

Here is the three-point message broken down for those who are cerebral. This will work for any sermon. It is somewhat detailed, and probably too technical, but wade through it for ideas. Don't forget to use illustrations, which you can find all over the Internet.

Title: (Write a headline for your sermon. Make it interesting so it will grab peoples attention)

Introduction:

1. Introductory Remarks- Start with an interesting story or quote that will capture your congregations attention.
2. Propositional Sentence: Describe to your congregation what you want them to learn from the sermon
3. Transitional Sentence: Connecting your sentence between the Introduction and the first Main Point. Note: The introduction should be written out including each of the points listed above.

Body of the Sermon:

I Main Point (Write this out)

- A. Supporting Scriptures- Choose two or three scriptures that all agree with your main-point (optional)
- B. Note: There may be several sub-points used in the explanation
- C. Illustration: give examples in the real world what the Supporting Scriptures mean
- D. Transitional Sentence: Connecting your 1st Main Point with your 2nd Main Point

II Main Point (Write this out)

- A. Supporting Scriptures- Choose two or three scriptures that all agree with your main-point (optional)
- B. Note: There may be several sub-points used in the explanation
- C. Illustration: give examples in the real world what the Supporting Scriptures mean
- D. Transitional Sentence: Connecting your 2nd Main Point with your 3rd Main Point

III Main Point (Write this out)

- A. Supporting Scriptures- Choose two or three scriptures that all agree with your main-point (optional)
- B. Note: There may be several sub-points used in the explanation
- C. Application: Show your congregation how to use the information that you

have taught them in their daily lives.

D. Transitional Sentence: Connecting your IIIrd Main Point with your conclusion

Conclusion: (Write this out completely)

1. Restate your Propositional sentence
2. Review the Main Points of your sermon
3. Present a final application of the overall message
4. Give an invitation for the unsaved to receive salvation

The Order

The preacher often determines at least part of the Order of Service. This needs to be taken up with whomever is in charge of the service. For an entire order, eulogy and homily, I strongly suggest that you [check out my link here](#). For a simplified order for a low-church service, try this:

The Prelude; The Welcome; Invitational Prayer; Hymn or Song; The Scripture(s); The Eulogy(s); A Poem or Song or Special; The Homily or Meditation; The Invitation; Closing Prayer; Benediction; Postlude.

I would strongly suggest that you write this all out. It will take work, but you will prove yourself to be a professional and you will perform as such because you will have a much better grasp on your material. Hey, people are going to point out the amateur and the hell raiser! Professionalism and anointing is what these people deserve; or, at least, what you deserve for yourself. If you ever want to preach again, don't miss this first chance.

The Graveside

This is also called "The Committal." You are committing the body to the earth, ashes to ashes; dirt to dirt. The Internet has MANY resources. I have to suggest those of the United Methodist Church, from which I came. Their material is excellent, meaningful and inclusive. The Committal usually takes 5 - 10 minutes. [You will find a Committal Service from the UMC at this link](#). Often at the end of the committal, those attending will walk past the coffin (which is suspended over the hole in the ground) to say goodbye, and sometimes they will even throw items like carnations in the hole. The best you can do is to stand as near to the coffin as possible, yet out of the way of the people, while they pass by, greeting and blessing each one with a word of a shake.

How to Identify Yourself to Officials

We are sectarians. Nobody knows what an Essene or a Yahad or a Messianic is. But if you are looking to preach, officials need to know who you are; and sometimes you may even have conflicts with church groups over who will be presiding over the service. (Examples.) So you must introduce yourself sufficiently and with credentials.

If you say, "I'm a minister with the Yahad," you may only get the opportunity because nobody else will do it. But if you get your foot in the door once, you are in like

Flynn. So what you will need to do is to be a little deceptive. The Yahad is indeed Wesleyan Methodist in polity, structure and most doctrine. You make request you clergy card (license) from me with the organization as something like “Wesleyan Assembly Online.” There is nothing untrue in this title - the Yahad is more Wesleyan than any Methodist Church in existence. The UMC gives lip service to their founder but does not follow Wesley’s command for Scriptural Holiness. In addition, if we trace our ordination succession back, it goes through Wesley back to Paul and to James. No one will question this title, and perhaps we should consider an “aka” when we modify the organization’s name.

How to be Recognized as an Ordained Minister in Your State

In some counties, you simply need to be ordained by a recognized body. However, now marriages are being annulled by states because ordinations have been obtained through online ordination-mills like [Universal Life Church](#), an organization that has distributed free ordination for anyone who will sign up (and millions have). This “church” site has many good resources, yet now state governments are catching up with them and declaring their ordinations as not sufficient for legal ceremonies.

So contact your county clerk. Let the clerk know you are a minister and ask what is required in order to perform a legal marriage. What is often required is some proof that the organization that ordained you is recognized as a legal entity. It is good to have on hand your ordination certificate, a letter from the organization stating that you are in good standing, a card from that organization that recognizes you as clergy - and it wouldn’t hurt to have the organization’s tax ID number or even articles of incorporation ([found on the organization’s website under “Legal”](#)).

Once the wedding has taken place, don’t forget to sign the license as presented to you by one of the parties to the wedding. (We will cover weddings in the next installment of this course.)

Defining and Distinguishing Deacons and Elders

Deacons are those who respond to Elohim’s call to lead in service and to equip others for this ministry through teaching, proclamation and worship, and who assist elders in the administration of the sacraments.

Ordained to Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice, Deacons are persons *called* by Elohim, authorized by the Yahad and ordained by a bishop to a *lifetime ministry* of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice to both the community and the congregation *in a ministry that connects the two*. Deacons exemplify discipleship, create opportunities for others to enter into discipleship and connect the needs and hurts of the people with the Yahad.

In the world, the Deacon seeks to express a ministry of compassion and justice and assists lay persons as they claim their own ministry. In the Yahad or congregation, the ministry of the deacon is to teach and to form disciples, and *to lead worship together with other ordained and lay persons*, connecting the needs and hurts of the people with

the Yahad.

Deacons are called to a lifetime of servant leadership. In the church's life they give leadership: in the teaching and proclamation of the Word, in worship and in assisting the elders in the administration of the sacraments of Tevillah and the Eucharist, in forming and nurturing disciples, in conducting marriages and burying the dead, in the congregation's mission to the world and in leading the congregation in interpreting the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world. In aiding in the restoration of the Earth and all Creation.

Deacons are accountable to the Yahad Leadership Council and the supervising Elder or Bishop for the fulfillment of their call to servant leadership.

Elders are clergy who are ordained to a ministry of *Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service*. This means elders preach and teach the Word, provide pastoral care and counsel, administer the sacraments of Tevillah and Eucharist, and order the life of the Yahad for service in mission and ministry.

The servant leadership of the elder takes place both in parish ministry as well as in extension ministries, like chaplaincy. Elders may itinerate, which means they serve in tasks, ministry settings or appointments *in which the bishop or assigns them*. Further:

Elders are ordained ministers who, by the favor of Elohim, have been found by the Yahad to be of sound learning, of pious character, possessing the necessary gifts and evidence of Elohim's favor, and whose call by Elohim to ordination has been confirmed by the Yahad. By the authority given in their ordination, they are authorized to preach and teach the Word, to provide pastoral care and counsel, to administer the sacraments of Tevillah and Eucharist and to order the life of the Yahad assigned for service in mission and ministry. Further:

Elders in Yahad may serve as parish pastors, approved teachers, military or institutional chaplains, pastoral counselors, spiritual directors, and in many other venues in which they nurture people in Elohim's love and order, in worship and ministry.

The Yahad provides endorsement, training, and support for elders and deacons who serve *outside of a congregation* as chaplains, pastoral counselors or *ministers at large*. It is the responsibility of Deacons and Elders to see to their continuing education as received from Yahad teachers or outside resources. Continuing education is especially important for the ordained of the Yahad because we position ourselves as superior autodidacts who should, individually or collegially, be trained thus able to answer any question, counsel any problem and solve any ministry adequately and simply enough to be understood. Often, this position is not appreciated, as many in similar faith positions have little respect for those with a higher level of experience and education. However, the Father is pleased with higher study, and our first priority as the ordained is to please our Creator and Sovereign.

Resources for Preaching

There are many excellent resources for preparing sermons and homilies. After awhile, the labor you do becomes a labor of love, especially if you manuscript your stuff so you

can reference it later. (At least get a voice recorder and record.) About the simplest and most hard-hitting little book I've ever found is called [The Nuts and Bolts of Preaching, which is at this link](#). (Password to read is letmein.) You will also need a ministers' manual, which we are working on right now, that has orders of services, scriptures, poems and prayers of every kind. Right now you're stuck with a Christian version, preferably a Methodist manual (again because our beliefs are closest to there's). [Check this link](#). There is also a book of Worship with very fine resources. [Check this link - they are free to download](#). The Vero Essene Yahad web site contains many of our services and resources in accordance with what we have accumulated over the years. [That page is here](#).

Some Requirements to Proceed to Elder due within the next 6 months

- Complete an Enneagram or similar personality assessment and turn it in.
- Be prepared to teach and preach to a group of your peers online. Schedule it.
- Continue your familiarity with the liturgy.
- Complete a monthly ministry report [found at this link](#), due month's end.
- Pay your dues.
- Continue your education in word, order, sacrament and service. You will need to take part in the liturgical portion of the service on Shabbat as soon as you are able. [Find that service here](#).
- If you have not been assigned a project, ask for one,
- Go-to people for these assignments are Elder Gary or Snyder.
- Supervisory ministers - Bishop Regesh for Rev. Kimmons, Snyder for Rev. Wilson.
- Continue to be courteous in meetings, addressing each by their title (Deacon Kenneth, for instance; or Elder Staten or Elder Yochanan)
- Be fluent in:
 - important Torah portions: Exodus 3 and 20, Leviticus 11 & 23,
 - One of the Gospels, the *Didache* and *Barnabas* - [these are available in pdf and audio here](#).
- Be familiar with:
 - the Nazarene Acts

At the end of the 6 months or, if you please, before, you will need to undergo an exam on these items. (Don't worry; it's not too hard.)

Final Words

If you are getting discouraged, let your supervisor know. That person will encourage you and help you. Everyone gets discouraged, but don't give up. Consider, you are every bit the minister that Charles Stanley, Billie Graham or Martin Luther King. What you lack is education and experience, and you will get that eventually. Note that by definition, the Deacon has *given his or her life to service*. If this is not true of you, if this is not a calling, then pray that Yah will make it so or stop now. But we try to make it easy for you, without the games of the church, the good ol' boy networks or the

Simony and nepotism. We must grow together. *Yahad is a body movement* - it's not the place for either the superstar or the sluggard. Make the effort; you will be rewarded with greater self-esteem until you *feel* as qualified as you already are. The Qadosh Spirit will not let you down. So see that your heart is in tune.

We are trying hard to make the Yahad a professional ministry organization, and we have gone to great lengths to do so. This is why so many elders have flown in and out like wandering stars. We are looking for longevity here, and a succeeding apostleship. The hands laid upon you are in the succession of James, the Master's brother. We hope you will take this seriously. And if it's too much, Deacons, consult your supervisor. All will be well. You will grow tremendously in the next year if you remain serious to your call and your ordination.

A Deacon's Prayer by Deacon Lazaro J. Ulloa

Come to my assistance my Master and my Eloah, that I may do for You all that you ask. Strengthen me in adversity and do not let me succumb to my feelings of worthlessness. Help me to feel in my heart all that You speak to me, and help me to understand. May I be to others what they need: a body to work when others cannot; a heart to love those who are forgotten; a shoulder to console those whose soul is in need; a smile to brighten the most somber of Your children; a mouth to proclaim Your love. Let me be to You, as a brush is to a painter, worthless without You, but capable of transforming the human heart by the power of Your mercy. Send me, my Good Master if you need me, to touch others as You would touch them, to hold them as You would, to love them as only You can. Make my heart like Yours, that I may forgive everything and love beyond my own human frailty. Come live within me, that I may die to myself so You may fill my very being. Let me serve others as You would serve them, that in doing so I may serve You. Do not let me fail, O Yah, or lead Your people astray. Allow me to live in Your presence today, that tomorrow I may die in Your hands and may You raise me one day that I may touch your face and live in Your glory. Amein.