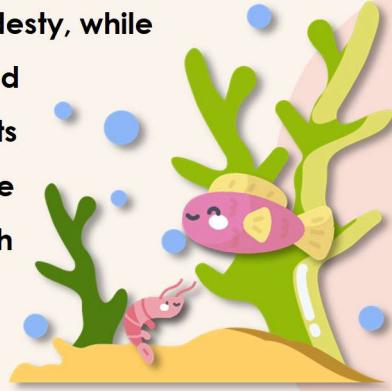


A Special Team

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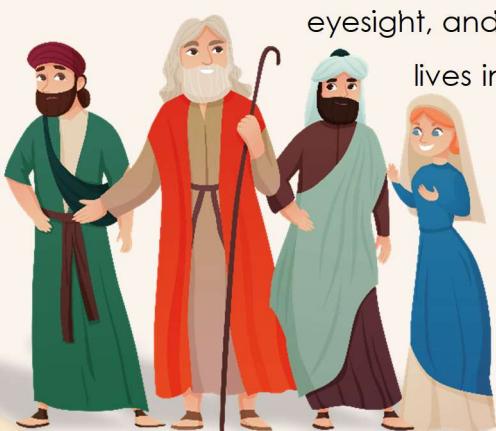
"On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."

Corinthians 12:22-27.



Have you ever felt like you and other people make a wonderful team? Have you ever seen a wonderful team in action? Maybe a sport team, or at school with your classmates, a team where it seems that every single member has a different gift and together, they complement each other. Today I want to tell you a story about a very interesting team!

The first member of this team is a goby fish: this fish is very small and even though his sight is very sharp he can do almost nothing against bigger fish that want to eat him; he doesn't have arms to dig a hole in the sand and hide in there. But... It's time to meet our second team member, this one is the blind shrimp: the shrimp has terrible



eyesight, and this is a huge problem for him because usually he lives in big open areas and during the day he needs to search for food and to do so he risks his life. These two animals have learnt how to work together; even though they are very different from each other they know their strengths and weaknesses. So... how does this work? Well, the blind shrimp uses his legs to build a home for the two of them,

and the sharp-sighted goby stays outside to guard the area and warn the shrimp when there is any kind of danger approaching so they can both hide in time. You almost never see a goby fish without his 6-legged friend and you never see a shrimp without his goby fish. The most interesting part of this team is that they have learnt how to communicate with each other! Scientists have discovered that the goby fish can also tell the shrimp how serious the threat is. Sometimes the shrimp knows when to work nearby the burrow's entry, sometimes they work right on the entry and sometimes they just go inside and hide really fast! This communication is very specific and unusual in nature, especially between different species.

Do you want to know how they talk to each other? When the shrimp wants to go out of his little home, one of his biggest antennas touches the goby fish and the goby fish taps his friend to let him know of the level of danger. At nighttime, the shrimp strategically puts some rocks on the sides of the hole, so if a predator tries to dive in their home, they are trapped. That way our two little friends are safe during the night.

When we learn about this awesome team that nature shows us, it just reminds me of one example in the Bible. He was a very important man that had to go through some serious difficulties. Maybe you already know who I am talking about. He was brave, persistent, a wonderful preacher, "his gifts and preparation entitled him to do almost any task"¹! He had so many qualities that sometimes we forget that Paul had a condition in his body that at that time was known as an illness or a concerning condition, but this never stopped him, as he used to travel a lot to tell everybody about the love of Jesus. God was always by his side, supporting him and making him stronger and stronger as he continued his honorable labor, but aside from the support from God, Paul was always surrounded by his brothers and sisters from many churches that loved him and took care of him.

This one time Paul wrote a letter to his friends that lived in Galatia:

"And even though my illness was a trial to you, you did not treat me with contempt or scorn. Instead, you welcomed me as if I were an angel of God, as if I were Christ

¹ The Acts of the Apostles 10:13

Jesus himself. Where, then, is your blessing of me now? I can testify that, if you could have done so, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me."² Can you imagine that? Galatians loved Paul so much that they would have given him their own eyes so Paul could be ok and healthy - there was no such thing as "too much" that they could do for him! The apostle also had close friends that were constantly taking care of him like Timothy, Silas and many others.

Paul never stopped working for God. He and his friends made a wonderful team, like the goby fish and the shrimp. Likewise, you should work for God too. That is the task Jesus left you - "Therefore go and make disciples", tell people about his Love, tell them about the beautiful home He is building for all of us. But Jesus does not want you to be alone in this task, he left a wonderful team... a family before he went back to Heaven... His Holy church, and like the goby fish and the shrimp, like Paul and his friends, you also can work with a team!

This Sabbath is really special, because we all remember about all the people... blind, deaf, autistic, those that use a wheelchair, crutches or have any other challenge with their body or mind; they are also part of our special family, and just like you, they have amazing gifts and abilities that your church dream-team needs! Why don't we work together for our Father and do the best we can?



² Galatians 4:14-15 NIV