

Zahakiel: Pastor, please offer an opening prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in Heaven. We come before Your Presence with thanksgiving for another week of victory and sanctification living the abundant life of Christ. We request Your Spirit to refresh us during this hour with Heavenly inspiration and instruction in righteousness. Thank You for hearing and answering our fervent prayers. In YAHSHUA's precious and holy name, AMEN.

Adriel Dean777: Amen, Amen

Elyna Nat: Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Barb: Amen

Gloria: Amen.

PETER 2: Amen

Ruthline: Amen

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath to everyone. Tonight's study is called "The Error of Elijah."

The life of the prophet Elijah is particularly important to Creation Seventh Day Adventists, because we see in Him a representation of a ministry that takes place just before the return of Christ, preparing the way for His Advent. Thus he establishes, as an individual, a role that we fulfill as a corporate Body. We read in prophecy, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of Yahweh, and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Mal 4:5, 6)

With these two verses ends the entire Old Testament record in English Bibles; clearly, this was a prediction of great significance to those who worship Yahweh.

The fulfillment of this verse, we are told in the Gospels, took place in the person of John the Baptist. An angelic messenger said to his father, "He shall be great in the sight of Yahweh, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to Yahweh their God. And He shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers

to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for Yahweh." (Luke 1:15-17)

So far as most Churches are concerned, this settles the matter completely. Little examination is given to the prophet's life from the pulpit. No applications are sought for his experiences to the current times. And yet, of the few people whom we know were taken up to Heaven without seeing death, the most is recorded about Elijah. His life, therefore,... his work for the nation of Israel, the boldness of his character, the faith with which he brought down fire from heaven... these ought to be the subject of diligent study among those who seek a similar experience. Furthermore, as closely as the life of John the Baptist mirrored that of his predecessor, his ministry did not fulfill every aspect of what Malachi foresaw. Elijah was to appear before "the great and dreadful Day of Yahweh." While it is certainly the case that John the Baptist appeared just before Yahshua's first Advent, this was not the Day of Yahweh that the Old Testament writer meant. The prophetic "Day" on which Yahshua first appeared was called "the accepted time" and the "day of salvation," by Paul. (2Cor 6:2) The New Testament writers spoke of the "great and terrible Day" as yet future when their epistles were penned, saying for example, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the Great Day." (Jude 1:6) The Book of Revelation mentions the "Great Day" of Yahweh's wrath twice, (6:17 and 16:14) in both places referencing future events.

It is apparent, therefore, that the Spirit and Power of Elijah, in which John the Baptist appeared, has work yet to do. Some may mistakenly believe that John's work before Christ's first appearance is sufficient to satisfy all that is written; after all, the prophecy did not say how long before the Great Day Elijah's work would resume. This cannot be correct; however. Consider that in referring to the time of the end, the Apostles wrote to the Churches, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Yahshua the Messiah." (1Th. 5:23) "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." (1Pet 2:11) With these and many other words, the followers of Christ bid the People of Yahweh to prepare, to be ready, to be holy, so that it may rightly be said of them in the Great and Terrible Day,

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Wife hath made Herself ready.” (Rev 19:7) His Wife has made Herself ready, it will be said in the time just before Yahshua’s return. This is a comforting thought for we who are standing in the light of Yah’s judgment, putting away all imperfections through the promises of Yah.

None of these writings, however, say, “Because of what John the Baptist did, prepare yourselves for the return of Christ Yahshua.” This is not to devalue the work of John; however, his purpose was to prepare Israel to receive Christ the first time, to be ready to abandon the broken theocracy of the Sanhedrin, and to join the spiritual Body of Christ, after He had offered Himself up for mankind on the cross. In this way, indeed, John the Baptist turned the hearts of these wayward children back to their Creator, so that His Only Begotten might be accepted by some.

And yet, the New Testament is an exhortation for preparation; just as their remains a Sabbath rest for the people of Yahweh who were keeping the letter of the fourth commandment, (Heb 4:9) so their remains a preparation for the coming Day of Yahweh, and it is before this Day that the last Elijah appears. Satan, who does not believe in the validity of the converted experience, is ever on hand to suggest doubts and discouragement when matters such as these are discussed.

By the promises of Yah, however, his every attempt is refuted by the Mind of Christ.

And this brings us back to the original Elijah, the prophet who lived in ancient Israel. We read of a critical incident in Elijah’s ministry, “And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets [of Ba’al] with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, ‘So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.’ And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. “And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the Word of Yahweh came to him, and He said unto him, ‘What doest thou here, Elijah?’” (1Kings 19:1-3, 9)

This precedes the well-known passage that describes a great wind, and then an earthquake, and then a blast of fire, and yet Yahweh was not in any of these impressive displays. Instead, the Creator of Heaven and Earth came to

the prophet as a "still, small Voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a Voice unto him, and said, 'What doest thou here, Elijah?'" (1Kings 19:12, 13)

Normally, when this passage is used as a centerpiece in a Bible study, the idea presented is that Yahweh is gentle, never needing more force or spectacle than is necessary. He speaks to His friends as softly as they are willing to receive Him, and this demonstrates the character of Agape. These things are all true; and yet, we must not overlook the content of what that Voice actually said either. It was a question, and it was gently phrased, but it was also a rebuke. Just as Yahweh asked Adam in the Garden, "Where art thou?" (Gen 3:9) so here He asks Elijah, "Why are you here?" Yah well knew the answers to both these questions, but He was drawing out the spirit of those with whom He was speaking, giving them an opportunity to see the state of their souls.

Elijah had run from Jezebel. One can be scared, and therefore run... but only until the body becomes tired. One can seek a reward and run after it... but only until the passion for that reward fades away. Those who "run" to do the work of Yahweh, it is they who will never tire, and who always accomplish that which they intend. "They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isa 40:31)

PETER 2: Amen

Zahakiel: It is interesting, in light of this verse, that even during his flight Elijah received assistance from the Almighty. He was given manna to eat, which sustained him for forty days. (1Kings 19:8) This did not mean, however, that his course was favoured by Heaven, and this is one of the more delicate lessons that the people of Yah must learn. The Father gives His people great freedom. He will speak to them through the Spirit, through doctrine, and through providence. Those who, through ignorance or error, do not choose the best course may continue to be blessed for a time, so that they will succeed as well as they are able; but those who walk perfectly after Christ must – even when it appears they are being effective – continue to seek the will of Yahweh at every step.

Only principle, not feelings, not circumstances, not even apparent victories, unerringly indicate that one is on the right course.

This is equally true for those outside and inside of the Church. Those who fellowship with the People of Yahweh, but are not in the Covenant may be tempted to think that it is enough to stand on the borders of Israel without stepping inside. Their lives may be content, peaceful, even at times visibly blessed by the presence of Yahweh, and through obedience to His commandments. And yet, the Voice of the Spirit is saying, "I have prepared a place for you to rest. What are you doing out here?" For those who are in the Church, the matters of daily life are subject to all manner of factors, such that some days may feel "good" and other days, "difficult." It is worth examining whether those labels are sufficient to accurately reflect the testimony of Yahshua. Whether one is standing in a valley, or on top of a mountain, only really matters to those who are on the earth, "in the world," spiritually speaking. To those who have a viewpoint based on the earth, the Voice of the Spirit asks, "What are you doing down there?"

As he fled from Jezebel, Elijah benefited from the intervention of Yahweh, but it was His purpose that it would bring him to a place, and to a condition, in which he was able to truly hear and understand the question that was being asked of him. "What are you doing here?" The question is as deeply-searching as it is gentle. It is an invitation to reflect on one's choices that led to the current state. It opens a window into the mind and spirit that would make those choices.

The judgment of the living is the condition of living in the question, "What am I doing here?" When this question is at the forefront, decisions based on emotion, or impulse, are excluded. Choices made in ignorance are largely eliminated, and sanctified caution is employed. The error of Elijah is that he did not ask himself this question. His vision was clouded by emotion, by discouragement and disappointment that his great display of holy authority did not lead to the reforms he expected. Nobody rose up to defend the prophet against the wicked queen. No protest is recorded against the monarch's decree that Elijah should die. He left the place to which Yah had called him, and the Almighty had to ask the question that Elijah did not ask himself.

This ought to be a lesson to the people who participate in Elijah's latter-day ministry on several levels. Grand displays, however righteous, do not necessarily win the heart. Winning the argument, overcoming the modern Priests of Ba'al, is not likely to spark the fires of reform. This does not mean that the ministry has been ineffective. That being said, the consistent testimony of Yahshua, in the words and in the life, will do more to reveal the love of Yahweh than even fire from Heaven, and this is the very thing that Yah has called His people to do. Bear the name that He has given them as a Church, speak words that come forth from a Spirit-filled heart, reveal joyful obedience to the commandments of Yah's Law, these are the effective elements of the ministry of Elijah, that turn the hearts of the children back to the Father.

Often, miracles such as fire from Heaven, or supernatural healing, or casting out devils, or being willing to submit to imprisonment for one's principles, these will set the stage and draw attention, but then Elijah's people must do his work, without fear, discouragement, or disappointment, so that the world can see why these things are important, why these visible displays are necessary.

The last Elijah will not be distracted by the state of the world, or the state of those whom Yah has called to be Israel. He will not be wrapped up in troubles from parents, children, or spouses, so that he is prevented from doing the work. To be sure, it is right and dutiful to be concerned for children, parents, and spouses.

The Scriptures say that the work of the Gospel cannot be faithfully performed by those who neglect the common duties of life or their legitimate obligations to others. (1Tim 5:8, 2Th 3:10, Mark 7:11-13) Should these things begin to tempt one away from the ministry, however the Mind of Christ will ask, "What are you doing here, Elijah," and the path is corrected.

The approach to the Ministry must be both balanced and comprehensive. Those who say, "I live a good, Christian life, and set an example for those around me," but think that this absolves them from their calling as an active evangelist (for so we are all called) have not heard the quiet Voice of conviction. Conversely, Christ cautioned His followers not to follow the example of the Pharisees, who said in various ways, "I am teaching the truth, and therefore have no need to attend carefully to the 'little' matters of life." Yahshua called judgment, mercy,

and faith the “weightier” matters of the Law, and these things lead to courtesy, patience, and the fruit of the Spirit. As was recently said among us, even the way we close a door reflects our sanctification.

Ultimately, Yah has given to each of us a complete life. It is a life filled with memorable, awe-inspiring moments, where we stand on a mountaintop and declare the goodness of our Creator. It is a life, also, filled with times when it is necessary to sweep the floors and dust the furniture. Is life better, or more glorious on the mountaintop than at the kitchen sink? No; it is all the same life. The Scriptures tell us that to everything there is a season. The “natural man” thinks this means that there are times when “life is good,” which is a common saying in the world, and also that “life is hard,” which is an equally common phrase.

To the one with the mind of Christ, “ALL” things work together for good. In times of obvious glory, we rejoice, because we see the blessings before us. In times of hidden glory, though, we also rejoice, because it is in times such as this that opportunities for righteous deeds arise. When Elijah summoned fire from Heaven to consume his sacrifice, He might have thought, “Life is good. I have represented Yahweh well, and the people will now turn back to the faith.” When he saw that the anticipated reform was slow in coming, and that the monarchy now sought to execute him for his act of rebellion, he might have thought, “Life is hard. I have done all I can, but the harvest is delayed.” Because of this, he did not realize he was adopting a point of view based on the surface of the earth (mountain or valley), and – not asking himself what he was doing there – he ran. When trials arise, and the attention is drawn, the question, “What are you doing here” is intended to cause self-examination, and a confirmation of the right course. Then must resolve be shown, to face those things that were formerly seen as forbidding.

The nominal Christians, including most Seventh-day Adventists, are waiting for Yahweh to speak to them in a loud voice. They say, “When the Sunday Law passes, we will know to prepare.” “When the Latter Rain falls, and we see miracles around us, we will know to be ready.” “When persecution begins, this is the sign to get serious.”

Those who have come in the spirit and power Elijah before the great Day of Yahweh do not think in such a way. They are guided in a sure path by the gentleness of Yahweh. They do not let perceived “highs” and “lows” cause

them to step down from the high place to which they are called, the right hand of the Father Himself, with Christ, above the highest mountain. Standing anywhere else would prompt the question, "What are you doing here?"

In "good" times and "difficult," the life we now live, at every one of those moments, is the life of Christ through us. It is the constancy, the consistent glory of our Father as shared with us and through us, which gives us peace, and strength, and joy. It is what calls us to stand in the "here" that Yah has intended for us to occupy. It is the testimony of this life that will win the hearts, and turn the children back to the loving arms of their Father in Heaven. Let this mind be in you, which is in Christ Yahshua.

Adriel Dean777: Amen

Zahakiel: Are there any comments or questions about the study tonight?

PETER 2: Amen

Zahakiel: If there are not, I'll ask Bro. Luke to offer a closing prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for giving us a life and ministry that, rather than dwelling in the earth, soars in the midst of heaven. We are blessed to have all things that we ask of you in accordance with your will, and the opportunity to, rather than run, put legs on our prayers. May your Spirit be with each one as we stand in the light of your judgment, asking and answering what we are doing in every moment of life. In the name of Yahshua we pray, amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Barb: Amen

PETER 2: Amen

Daphna: Amen

Gloria: Amen.

Adriel Dean777: Amen. Amen

Elyna Nat: Amen

Peterson: Amen

Ruthline: Amen