

Zahakiel: Let's begin. Pastor, please offer an opening prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in Heaven. We come before Your Presence with praise and thankful hearts, knowing You care for Your children and seek full salvation for all. We are also thankful for the Sabbath day wherein we expect additional refreshing from Your Spirit. Bless us with what we need for this hour of worship. In the Holy name of Yahshua, Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Barb: Amen

Naraiel b: Amen

Adriel777: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Ruthline: Amen

Marie: Amen😊

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath to everyone. Since Bro. Luke has been having some electrical difficulties this week, he's asked me to facilitate the study for tonight. As such, we'll be doing what is likely to be our second-to-last study in the Subtle Snares of Satan series. As we near the completion of this study, which deals with processing our thoughts to ensure that we are in harmony with the Mind of Christ, it may be useful to step back and take a broader view of the context of our discussions. You may have noticed that near the end of each of the studies in this series in which we examine a false thought, I've referenced the Sabbath Commandment.

There is a reason for this.

I will make two connected statements that I would like to offer for your prayerful consideration. The first is this: Every sin, no matter what its precise nature, is a violation of the Sabbath Commandment.

The second is like it: Every false thought is a violation of the Sabbath Rest.

I pray you see the truth in these ideas, for it is written, "I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness, and I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am Yahweh that sanctify them." (Ezek. 20:10-12)

Most who call themselves Christians, even most who identify with Adventism, do not believe that there is any continued blessing in the annual Feast Days of Yahweh. And yet, the Old Testament really does not make a difference between the Annual and Weekly "Sabbaths" that Yah gave to humanity for each of them has something to teach, even within the New Covenant, regarding "Yahweh that sanctify [us]."

Each convocation that the Almighty ordains has a specific reason for existing, for Yah does nothing arbitrarily. This is why Christians continued to keep the Feasts for hundreds of years after the crucifixion, until the corruption of the Roman Church replaced them with poorly-concealed pagan festivals.

For Creation Seventh-day Adventists, however, who are taking their places as the 144,000 of prophecy, whether we are celebrating the life without leaven, or dissolving our connection to the world whilst spiritually dwelling in roofless tabernacles, the Sabbaths of Yahweh are a sign between Him and His people.

The weekly Sabbath has an especially sanctifying power, for it is designed to show us that by our own works we can accomplish nothing of everlasting significance. It is only when we permit these fragile human vessels to perform the works of the Father and Son, submitting to Their will by faith, that we can affect the destinies of souls – our own, and those who hear our testimonies.

But every act of sin, every transgression of the law, also violates the Sabbath, because an “act” of sin is a work – in fact, it is a “work of the flesh” as Paul describes it. (Gal 5:19). Any work that is not ordained by Heaven is a contradiction of the rest that Christ Yahshua gives to all who come to Him. It is an attempt to accomplish something by one’s own will in the absence of divine guidance, and so it violates the instruction: “Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of Yahweh thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work.” (Exo 20:9, 10)

The Sabbath is often thought of as an instruction for a single day; in fact, it is an instruction for the entire week. Six days are given for productive, sanctifying labor, and one day is given for productive, sanctifying rest. Sins are neither of these things, and therefore find no place in the sacred time outlined by the Fourth Commandment of Yahweh. Thus is illustrated the truth of the first statement.

Consider, now, what leads to acts of sin. Thoughts are what compel actions. A violation of the Sabbath day begins with a state of unrest in the spirit and mind, just as the commission of sin begins with a mental enticement that is not repelled by the fleshly mind. (James 1:14, 15) A false thought, which is made manifest in unsanctified words or actions, begins with (or is permitted by) a lack of rest.

A mind that is resting in Christ will not consciously cherish a false thought, and divine wisdom will reveal the difference between true and false beliefs among those who are actively seeking righteousness. Where there are blind spots, Yah has commissioned His Fellowship, His Church, to aid His individual saints in coming up to the stature of the fullness of Christ, and here we see the place for Covenanted Church memberships – for all the blessings of Yah are one, whether Sabbaths, or Feasts, or membership amongst the saints, they are all given to us for the purpose of perfecting holiness, which is what the word “sanctification” actually means.

We would observe, then, that for those seeking to perfectly follow Christ, receiving only a part of these blessings will not result in complete sanctification. A Sabbath-keeper who rejects Church membership, or the observance of Yah's educational Feasts, will not be able to distinguish the true faith from the subtle snares of Satan. Similarly, a Feast-keeper whose experience does not include the Righteousness by Faith that is promoted by Yah's Covenant will not attain the testimony of Christ Yahshua.

Let none who desire the eternal inheritance despise the least of our Father's gifts to His people. As these things all work together, the saint learns more and more perfectly what it is to have the divine mind and nature. The people of Yah consider their own thoughts, cherishing those that are inspired by the Creator, and rejecting as alien and hateful those that arise from the unregenerate flesh, and from the whispers of the Adversary. The mind remains in perfect Sabbath rest, experiencing no discontent that offers the foothold for false thoughts to take hold.

The two snares we are considering tonight will perfectly illustrate what I mean, that false thoughts violate the Sabbath rest. They are "I need" and "Just in case." Let's look at these one at a time.

When someone says, "I need," it may be a very subtle snare, because within the right context the statement may be true. Yah has designed our bodies to need things – air, water, nutrients, and so on. At times, He has performed miracles such that His servants (like Moses and Elijah) have gone for extended periods of time without these things, but in general it is His design that we rely on His providence as manifest through the resources we require.

Often, however, "I need" is applied in improper ways. The people of the world, of course, "need" many things...a large income, a spacious home, a modern car, etc. We aren't really considering that tonight, because as believers we have accepted the inspired counsel:

"But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content; but they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." (1Tim 6:6-9)

The love of worldly fame, prestige and possessions is undoubtedly a snare, but it's not really a subtle one for the spiritually-minded. For these, Satan has prepared a more delicate set of temptations.

The spiritually-minded, the religious, may genuinely desire to serve Yah, and the Enemy has no problem with that, so long as they do not actually serve Him. What he excels at is killing faith at the point of action, of permitting the good intentions, the righteous desires, for these allow the nominal Christian to feel good, and that they are progressing, evolving toward holiness – but at the same time supply a convincing reason why following through would be impossible. Convincing the Christian not to embark upon some act of

righteousness because something is lacking...is quite an effective weapon against those who have not learned to process their thoughts and their beliefs.

The question "How?" is often a valid one – but it is not one that the Father has neglected when inspiring us in ministry or evangelism. If He should say to one, "Go to such a place and give a testimony," it is reasonable to pray regarding how best to do this; however, it is not the Christian faith to begin to list reasons why the assignment was given in error. Yah will not be surprised by any question asked of Him, or any statement made to Him. If He should say, again, "Go to such a place and give a testimony," and the reply is, "But I cannot do that. I need a car," or "time," or "money," or "a better reputation amongst that audience," He will never reply by saying, "Oh, my mistake... I didn't realize that."

As long as we know we have understood the instruction properly (and Yah's people are very useful for confirming the proper interpretation of inspiration) then we also know that we have already been supplied with everything we need for the fulfillment of that instruction. What is next is to make such steps as we are currently able, and then we will see the miracle unfolding before us. Here is a passage relevant to this idea:

"And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; and as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan, and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of Yahweh stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan." (Joshua 3:14-17)

Let me know when you've read this.

Pastor Chick: F

Barb: Done

Lucan: F

Ruthline: F

Adriel777: F

Gloria: F

Naraiel b: F

Elyna: F

Peter Jr 18: F

Zahakiel: The Scriptures make it clear that the river was overflowing when the priests were called to pass over the Jordan bearing the ark, but the instruction was for them to cross the water without waiting for a more convenient time. They were specifically told that the waters would part for them, (verse 13) and before they saw a ripple of fulfillment

of this promise, they stepped in. They moved forward, not seeing with their eyes how they would make it through the overflowing waters.

The flesh would say, "You need to wait until the waters go down," or – conceding somewhat to the faith that was claimed – "You need to see a sign that Yahweh will provide a way for you." Had these priests done so, however, the ark would have stayed right where it was. Yah waited until the shoes of the ark-bearers were soaked before He began to work, and the path was cleared just as He foretold. The priests had what they needed... they had the Word of Yah, and the trust to begin their journey on the strength of His promises.

But what about afterwards?

The priests had overcome the snare to think that they needed something to begin, but suppose, as they stepped into the river, one or more of them thought within themselves, "I will begin to walk, but I will keep my eye on the river's source just in case it remains high and I need to run back to the shore."

Here we see the second snare.

When "I need" fails, Satan has a follow-up temptation. The act of faith has begun, but the actor has one hand on the plough and another on the escape button. If the Christian life were merely an improvement on an existing life, then it could be "tried." People could put one foot into the Jordan to see how fast the river was flowing and leave the other on dry ground; and indeed, many who withdraw from Christianity did so because they entered with a "probationary" attitude toward it.

But there is no return from death. There is no true resurrection of the sinful flesh.

We read Paul's doctrine on the beginning of everlasting life, stating that it takes place "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1Cor 15:52)

The dead are raised "incorruptible." The body that goes into the earth and returns to the elements is not actually brought back as it was. The breath of life is returned to the individual at the point where their bodies have lain, but at that very moment it is glorified, made anew, and in the likeness of the brightness of the Father and Son. It is not the sinful flesh that comes out of the grave, but the glorious, perfected flesh, made suitable to be the vessel for the divine character that was developed in life.

What happens in the physical world must first happen spiritually.

In order to obtain this glorification of the body, there must first be a glorification of the mind and spirit...and this comes only after the self has died, truly and completely. One who attempts to witness the blessings of the Christian life while not being fully surrendered, not being fully dead, will see others rejoicing in what they cannot see, and

worshipping a God whom they cannot hear. They will conclude, "There is nothing real to this faith; these people are deluded," and they will go away, escaping from everlasting life through the door labeled "Just in case."

The old woman whom Yahshua praised, (Mark 12:42) who gave two mites to the Temple while the wealthy Pharisees carefully counted out the worth of their generosity, might well have thought, "I had better hold on to this little money, just in case I need to buy food tomorrow." Ananias and Sapphira fell prey to this very snare, keeping back a part of the money from the sale of their property, (Acts 5) while wishing to be seen as faithful and charitable. They did not survive, either spiritually or physically, their self-deception.

The individual who hears, "Whosoever is born of Yah doth not commit sin, and there are a people who bear this testimony, preparing for the soon return of Yahshua," is immediately faced with this snare should they begin to believe the promise. The enemy comes to them and, seeing that they are inclined to believe, immediately attempts to sabotage their experience by saying, "That's probably true, but you'd better not jump in with both feet here. Keep some part of yourself, some skepticism, some self-assurance, separate from your surrender to Christ, just in case this doesn't turn out to be true," or, "Just in case you won't be able to actually do what these people say you can do."

I have heard these words, in various forms, in different ways, from quite a number of sources, especially during my early years as a Creation Seventh-day Adventist. When I spoke to a congregation in Florida some years ago, one of the members approached me afterwards and said something to the effect that, "Your zeal is good to see, but don't get too excited about this being free of sin. I once believed something similar to what you were saying, and it's important to be balanced about this because you don't want to feel like too much of a failure in the case that you don't maintain victory for the rest of your life." I rebuked him, saying, "My faith is that I will succeed in all that Christ calls me to do, and if you had truly believed anything like what I was saying, you would rejoice to hear my words."

The people of Yah do not need a backup plan "in case" Yah's promises fail. We are the people with the most cause for rejoicing in all the earth, for nothing can prevent the words of our Father from coming to pass, and He has already told us His intentions toward us, just as He told the priests in the Book of Joshua His intentions before they began to walk. It was not until they had begun, however, that their faith was confirmed by sight.

In this generation, the faith once manifest by these priests is desperately needed. The Sabbath blessing, as bestowed upon both the day and the continuous spiritual rest, is desperately needed. Among those who stand under the banner of Christ, careful self-examination is necessary, both for sanctification and for evangelism with a living, powerful testimony.

The Gospel, the Good News, is that the divine nature and the mind of Christ are given to all who believe, and all who seek righteousness, so that none shall fail, nor even be discouraged from victory, by even the subtlest of snares.

As I said near the beginning, there is no false thought that is not a violation of the Sabbath Rest Principle. The question was asked during the recent Feast of Tabernacles, "How do we identify a false thought when we are performing mental processing?" My answer was, and correctly, "You can know a false thought when it manifests in improper words and actions."

We need not wait, however, for the false thought to show up in actions in order to identify it if we listen to the Holy Spirit with the mind of Christ. If we have some blind spot then yes, it may come out in the actions before it is caught. Ideally, however, and the 144,000 will master this before the end...for those whose minds are resting on Christ, whenever a false thought is suggested, it may be weighed against the Sabbath blessing. If the thought does not enhance contentment of the mind...if it does not maintain perfect joy in the Spirit...if it does not deepen the Sabbath rest within us, then it may safely be rejected as untrue.

"I need," and "Just in case," are two clear examples of such thoughts within the context of the Christian faith. Let us consider these things for the remainder of the Sabbath hours before us, and on into everlasting life, for this is the will of our Father for all who call upon His name. May we be richly blessed as we learn ever more completely of the Mind of Christ that we have been given freely, eagerly, but at infinite cost.

Are there any comments or questions about the study tonight?

Adriel777: Amen

Marie: Amen

Zahakiel: If not, then I'll ask Bro. Luke to offer the closing prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for the life, righteousness, and mind of your Son. We are blessed as we pour out all that we are into your service, experiencing the true purpose of humanity. As we rest in your Sabbath, may your Spirit abide with us individually and as a people. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Barb: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Ruthline: Amen

Naraiel b: Amen

Gloria: Amen

Marie: Amen