

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

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in heaven, we come before Your Presence with Thanksgiving for another victorious week, and we expect a Sabbath refreshing from Your Spirit for this hour of fellowship. Open our hearts and minds as we contemplate the concepts shared. In Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

Barb: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

daphna: Amen

Nattie: Amen.

Adriel7777: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Marie: Amen

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

In the Gospels, Yahshua said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Mat 10:34)

We all know what a sword is, and what it does. It is a symbol of warfare, and all that comes with it... fear, division, destruction. Because of Yahshua's name, families and friends have been separated, some choosing the Kingdom of Life, and others the second death. And yet, the division that Yahshua's sword brings is not merely separation for no purpose. It is neither absolute nor permanent, and in fact it is only through this sword the Son bears that true unity may be found.

Amongst no other people or Church upon the earth is the concept of the spiritual Covenant discussed except here within the Family of Yahweh. It is a rich subject, because there is always more light that is shed upon our path concerning the connection, formal and sacred, between the Creator and His people. We have seen that each Covenant that the Father has made with humanity has had a number of elements in common, including the foundation (which is always the Law) and then some details based upon the particular generation in which it was enacted. There is a promise that Yah makes, and responsibility that the people bear, and a token that represents the agreement in the material world.

Abraham, for example, received the Covenant of circumcision... that was the token. Moses received the tablets of the Ten Commandments as the token of the renewed covenant that Yah made with Israel, and Christians have received baptism into Church membership as the visible sign of conversion and atonement.

Yahshua came, not to bring peace, but a sword. He came to bring the Sword of the Spirit, which divides flesh from spirit, separating the carnal from the sanctified, "and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb 4:12) Yahshua "cuts" us out of the world with His Sword. However, that is not all that it does.

This cutting, this separation, is a necessary first step before we may be joined to others through an acceptance of His Covenant, and we see that this is the pattern of each example we have given so far, and every example that we may possibly cite. They all begin in the same way...

Of Abram who became Abraham we read, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee." (Gen 12:1)

To Moses and the Israelites He said, "I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." (Exo 3:17)

To the Christian comes the doctrine, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:19)

Unity of the spirit begins with a separation from some previous association, a coming out of the world. Eve was first separated from Adam, who represented the earth, and then was joined to him in marriage once they were both distinct, living beings. Following the same pattern, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." (Gen 2:24)

The word "cleave" is an interesting translation choice; ordinarily, it means to cut... that which a sword would do. The Hebrew word doesn't have the same connotation; it simply means to cling tightly... but it is interesting terminology, nonetheless.

Spiritual covenants always begin with a separation from the common, the ordinary, and the earthly. They then require unity for the purpose of producing a specific result: a people. Marriage is intended to produce children. The escapees from Egypt were to raise up a mighty nation to worship Yahweh. The Christian Church produces the 144,000, who perfectly follow the Lamb into everlasting glory. This is the pattern that we see from Genesis to Revelation. Thus, we understand how Yah has always dealt with humanity; it is through covenants – separating them from the world, joining them together, and then bringing forth fruit from that union.

In this generation, what does the Covenant of Yahweh look like?

It is described in Revelation 14, which we often cite when speaking of our work just as the doors of human probation close:

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads." (Rev 14:1)

We then see what has gathered them together, a message well-known to Seventh-day Adventists of all kinds as the "Three Angels' Message," which is the Everlasting Gospel.

Each angelic messenger has a portion of the saving message, which prepares a people to follow Yahshua, and to receive the promise of life everlasting, unbroken by the sleep of death... but it is the third angel specifically that brings all the faithful together into a single, united whole, which completes the New Testament Covenant.

Consider what each angel says. The first utterance is, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Rev 14:7)

This is the very first step in becoming a citizen of the Heavenly Kingdom. One must know that Yah is the Creator, and acknowledge His judgment. One must "come to life," spiritually, escaping the wages of sin through perfect Victory... but this is by necessity an individual experience. Victory and judgment are the destiny of everyone; none can be saved, and none can be judged, on behalf of anyone else.

The second angel says, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." (Rev 14:8)

The fall of Babylon is the end of confusion. It is the triumph of truth, clarity, and pure doctrine. This is the call to "come out of her," to leave behind the world and its confusion, and those who receive it are "cut" from the world by the Sword that Yahshua brings.

When one accepts Victory over sin, and then begins to live the Faith of Yahshua, that faith, the beliefs and practices of Christ, will separate the holy from the unholy, the true child of the King from both the world that hates Him and the false women that claim deceitfully to be His Son's Bride.

Here again, though, this is largely a solitary experience, and in fact may leave one isolated from the groups and organizations with which he previously associated. It is the third and final step that involves unity as a matter of necessity. One must awaken, separate from the world, and then here find the unity of the Covenant.

As we examine the Scriptures, we see the pattern repeating again and again... Abraham, Moses, Isaac from his homeland, Joseph from his brothers, Adventism from the daughters of Babylon, and now the Remnant Believers from what has become of Adventism. Yah awakens, cuts out, and then unites in order to bring forth holiness on the earth. Most do not awaken. Most who awaken do not separate from the world. Most who separate from the world do not come together in the unity of Yah's covenant. We see human souls littering the ground between the grave and the gates of the City. Few there be, as the Savior said, who find the narrow Way.

It is the Third Angel who unites those that have been awakened, and have come out from the world into the purity of Yah's true worship. It is the Third Angel that says, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation." (Rev 14:9)

What has this to do with unity?

Everything... for it is impossible to accomplish without the Covenant to which Yah calls all of humanity. It is the Third Angel that requires a people to know the "beast and his image," to understand their mark (for worship of one is the worship of the other), and then we see the result:

"Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of Yahweh, and the faith of Yahshua." (Rev 14:12)

"Here are they," the Word reads, not "Here is he." There is no concept in the Scriptures of scattered individuals, here and there, overcoming the Beast in isolation. It is a people, a mighty "They," who resist Satan's operations through human agents.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." (Rev 12:11)

Not the words of their testimonies, but the word (singular) of their testimony (again singular). There is only one people, and only one testimony, that overcomes the Beast and his image. These are the ones who accept the Covenant, who have been redeemed from the earth through Repentance, and then Faith, and then Baptism... not baptism into Christ only, but "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Cor 12:13)

Receiving the Third Angel is not a solitary experience, nor indeed can it be. Those who are saved by grace have been cut from the world for the sole purpose of uniting together in the Covenant of Christ Yahshua, for it is "they" and not "he here and she there" that overcome the Beast and his image.

Thus for Adventists, who read these prophecies, let them know to seek the Covenant of Yah. Strange as it may seem... it would be better, more true to prophecy, for them to remain in the Conference churches, than to scatter into individual groups led by self-sent messengers, for by doing so they ensure that they will never understand the Mark of the Beast.

Every angel carries with him a set of blessings that act in the spiritual world like material equipment. The Scriptures speak of swords, and shields, of armor, helmets, bows, slings and arrows. These are symbols; but because they are symbols, do not dismiss them as exaggerations or loose analogies. The angels carry weapons upon them that drive off demons and that pierce mortal consciences to see if they will respond to the awareness of their guilt. Divine arrows struck the hearts of the faithful Hebrews when they heard Peter speak on the Day of Pentecost and prompted them to call out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

We who are subjects of Yah's covenant have all felt the keen edge of a spiritual weapon, piercing our spirits, and cutting us out of the world. But mere guilt does not lead to salvation – leaving behind a sinful existence is only part of the journey to life.

It is only in unity that Christ's prayer is fulfilled, "That they might know thee, the only true God, and Yahshua the Christ, whom thou hast sent... that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." (John 17:3, 21)

The Third Angel's weapon is the sword of unity, the very same sword by which Yahshua divides the carnal from the spiritual. There are counterfeit messages of victory, and multitudes of false doctrines that claim to be true... but a spirit is relatively easy to discern. John, in fact, did not say "test the doctrines," or "try the message," but rather, "Try the spirits whether they are of Yah." (1 John 4:1)

This is what the seekers of truth are able to determine, and it is the spirit – a common spirit – that unites a people into a Church, that dictates their focus, their direction, and their approach to the coming judgment. It is only in unity, and only in unity led by the Spirit of truth, that the Mark can be successfully resisted. It is only through a proper understanding of all Three Angels, of victory, of purity, and of the nature of the enemy of souls, that the Church arises... for the purpose of the Church is to teach the Gospel, which is the very message that three angels are sent to proclaim.

Resisting the Mark, the true mark of the Beast's final Image, identifies a Church as Christ's people. They have received all three Angels in their order, for without Victory they will not see the necessity of resisting the temptation to compromise with the world unto death. Without purity of doctrine, they will not have the principles necessary to see the heart of the Dragon acting even through Churches that claim to be Protestant.

Among Seventh-day Adventists, even among those called out of Protestantism, we again see the pattern. Few have, or even believe, Victory over sin. Few who claim some measure of victory have avoided the complacency of the mainstream Church or the fanaticism endemic to its various independent ministries. None, none but the tiny remnant, can see the Beast and its Image now working through civil laws and governments in a final attempt to silence the messengers of the Gospel. What most believe, based upon traditions that they have not considered in the light of time, place, and circumstance, is that laws enforcing Sunday Observance vs. the keeping of the Sabbath day will be the final test of religious orthodoxy.

What few are able to grasp, because they have neither the First nor the Second Angel in truth, is that this test, in this most deceived generation, would result in a scattered bunch of Saturday-keepers, one believing this thing and another believing that... most doctrines correct or nearly correct, but all without the necessity of a life based upon Agape. In other words, this would result in the very situation that the Third Angel must correct before there can be a people prepared for translation without seeing death.

The Word says, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." (Heb 4:9)

Often, this verse is used as "proof" that the Sabbath is to be kept in the New Testament. While it may indeed be used that way, it must also be understood that this verse, this book, was written to Hebrews... to those who were already keeping Friday sunset to Saturday sunset as a holy day. It is to these, who already kept the letter of the Law, that the inspired author wrote, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb 4:1)

We see this among Seventh-day Adventists in this generation... we see Sabbath-keepers in the letter, who – we fear – have not entered into Christ's rest, His Sabbath more fully, His peace that surpasses understanding. Like the Hebrews of the Old Covenant, they are outwardly observant of the requirements of Heaven, but miss its spirit entirely, being cut out of the world by a sword of division, but never united under the Third Angel by the Sword of the Spirit.

There is a clear parallel, then, between those who recognize and resist the Beast, and those who recognize and accept the Covenant. The Sword of Unity has cut them out of the world, and then pressed them together in a common understanding, purpose and spirit.

Just as the Sabbath Day is the token of Yah's covenant with Israel after the flesh, so the Sabbath more fully, the true spiritual rest, and the spirit of Agape love... this is the token of Yah's covenant with His 144,000. One who keeps the Sabbath Day may nevertheless "wonder after the Beast," (Rev 13:3) accepting its character as his own. But one who keeps the Sabbath "in spirit and in truth" rests in the Salvation that Christ has won, His Victory for us at infinite cost, and inherits Yahshua's own pure faith. He therefore lives in the Covenant supported by the two nails that also hold up the Law:

"Thou shalt love Yahweh thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Mat 22:37-39)

Are there any comments or questions about tonight's study?

Adriel7777: Amen

Elyna: Amen

Zahakiel: If there are none, then I'll ask Bro. Luke to close the meeting with a prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for the sword of your Spirit, which has separated us from sin and confusion. We thank you for cutting away the dross, and preparing us for a fit place in your temple. We thank you for bringing us together into the place you have prepared for us, built up together in your Spirit. May your blessing remain upon us through the Sabbath and beyond, as we seek others who you have cut out and prepared for your work. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

Elyna: Amen.

Adriel7777: Amen

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Naraiel: Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

daphna: Amen

Barb: Amen

Nattie: Amen.