

Lucan: It's time to begin. Bro. David, will you please offer an opening prayer?

Zahakiel: Let us pray... Almighty Father in Heaven, we come before you with thanksgiving... remembering the blessings of the week that has passed, and rejoicing in the time of blessing and peace you have provided for us from the foundation of the world. May all be open to hear your voice as it comes forth from your servant, and may all receive the intended blessing for this Sabbath day. We ask this in the name of your Son, Yahshua. Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

nattie: Amen.

Naraiel: Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Barb: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Elyna: Danielle: Amen

Lucan: Tonight's message is called "Many shall be offended," which is taken from the following passage:

Lucan: "And Yahshua answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all [these things] must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these [are] the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matthew 24:4-14) (LMK)

Adriel777: F

Zahakiel: Finished

Pastor Chick: F

Barb: F

daphna dee: F

Naraiel: F

Elyna: F

Peter_Jr_18: F

nattie: F

Lucan: This passage is both concise and thorough, containing several prophecies that provide much to meditate on. We have considered "the love of many" in a past sermon; tonight, I would like to focus in particular on verse 10: "And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another."

We may note that the "and then" is just after the faithful are delivered up to be afflicted, and are hated for Christ's name's sake; we in the church of Philadelphia are quite familiar with the modern fulfillment of these events. Creation 7th Day Adventists have seen countless souls become offended, even among our own number at times; as it is written, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would [no doubt] have continued with us: but [they went out], that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." (1 John 2:19)

Separation is the end result of offense, even as death is the end result of sin. Just as sin is conceived by desire, offense is conceived by disappointment.

We know in this age that many shall be offended, and we know the steps of gospel order which root out and resolve offense among the righteous when it arises. Yet how do we know when we are offended, so that we may resolve it? We know the promise, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." (Psalms 119:165)

What we must have here is discernment, lest we enter into presumption. The promise that we cannot commit sin (1John3:9) is no invitation to become passive about temptation; rather, we cannot commit sin in part because we find it hateful, and reject any temptation to commit it firmly.

Similarly, the promise that we shall not be offended is not an invitation to ignore the beginnings of offense in the heart. Just as a cherished temptation will lead to sin and death, a cherished variance between brethren will lead to offense and separation from Yahweh and His people. Satan is at hand to widen any gap, however slight or imaginary; it is our duty to seal the cracks with the mortar of love and communication.

To discern whether we are offended, or are tempted to become offended, we must look at what it means to be "offended" in the Biblical use of the word. We will do this in two ways; first we will look at places it is used for context, and second, we will look at the word itself.

Beginning, then: "And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this [man] this wisdom, and [these] mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this [man] all these things? And they were offended in him. But Yahshua said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." (Matthew 13:54-58) (LMK)

Zahakiel: Finished

Adriel777: F

Barb: F

daphna dee: F

nattie: F

Naraiel: F

Pastor Chick: F

Elyna: F

Lucan: Here we see that those who knew of Yahshua's humble birth and family were offended at Him because of that very familiarity. Note that they did not dispute that the teaching was of wisdom, or that He performed mighty works. Rather, they were filled with unbelief that He could be what He claimed to be, having come from such a familiar and common background. He did not meet their expectations of glory and majesty, and they were filled with unbelief; they became offended.

"And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." (Matthew 15:10-14)

The Pharisees were offended in Yahshua repeatedly and often deliberately; those who love sin, who trust in their own righteousness, and who hold their own judgment as though it were Yah's own will always be offended at the actions and words of the righteous. Towards such, Yahshua had no concern for offense; rather, He answered that they would be rooted up and offended regardless, as would every one not born of Yahweh.

"Then Yahshua answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is [he], whosoever shall not be offended in me... And all the people that heard [him], and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him." (Luke 7:22-23, 29-30)

Yahweh and His messengers rarely come in just the manner expected, saying just the things expected. Had the message and messengers been known and expected as such, there would have been little reason to send the message to begin with. Yet when a

testimony arises from one in a manner that is not according to our tastes, expectations, or sensibilities, how often is the temptation present to become offended, and to "reject the counsel of God!" Blessed indeed are those who are not offended in Yahshua and His messengers, as we may see the end result of indulging such temptation:

"For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought." (Isaiah 29:20-21)

Of those who have gone out from among us, such has been the sure tale. What begins as unresolved disappointment and wounded self becomes resentment and distrust, which then manifests as a desire to find an excuse to "make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth." It was thus that the Pharisees laid snares for Yahshua, to catch Him in His words; they had already become offended, but now sought justification for their offense by finding some evil, be it real or manufactured.

To those who love Yahshua and hate sin, finding some evil in ourselves or in our brethren is a cause for rejoicing once the sin is repented of and cleansed.

To those who love sin and hate the light, finding some evil in one reproving them is taken as justification for their own sins; the worst possible outcome in such a person's mind would be for the one reproving them to repent and be healed, as it would show even more forcefully their own lack of righteousness. It is for this reason that those who are offended seek to hide, and ultimately separate from those who reprove them, to "go out from among us." It is for this reason that "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." (1 John 3:15) And again, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." (Lev. 19:17)

And again, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." (John 3:19-21)

Lest we take the promise in Psalms to an extreme, we must consider whether Yahshua was at any time offended.

"From that time forth began Yahshua to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto

Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." (Matthew 16:21-23)

Here we see that it is an offense to Yahweh, His Son, and Their people to set forth the things of the world as opposed to the things of Yahweh; to speak doubt rather than faith, to speak discouragement rather than victory, compromise rather than principle, or disobedience rather than strict adherence to Yah's instructions.

While those who love Yahweh's law will never be offended for themselves, the world is full of people and words that offend Yahweh, and thus His people. While we are never offended, we share in Yahweh's offense at those that savor the things of men over the things of Yahweh; indeed, such righteous offense is the basis of the third angel's message. Those who do not share in Yahweh's offense at iniquity cannot share in His joy at righteousness; they do not know Him.

There is another type of offence of which it is written, "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and [that] he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast [them] from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast [it] from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." (Matthew 18:6-9) (LMK)

Zahakiel: Finished.

Adriel777: F

Pastor Chick: F

Barb: F

nattie: F

daphna dee: F

Peter_Jr_18: F

Elyna: F

Lucan: The consequence of this type of offence is everlasting fire if the offending member is not removed. To understand this passage more clearly, we need to examine the meaning of the word "offence." In Greek, the word is "skandalon," and is the root of the English word "scandal." It is translated at times as "stumbling block" or "occasion of stumbling," but most commonly as simply "offence."

The word for "offend" is similar; it is "skandalezo." It has no other translations except for "offend" or "make to offend," however Strong's gives the following helpful definitions:

- 1) To put a stumbling block or impediment in the way, upon which another may trip and fall, metaph. to offend. To entice to sin, to cause to fall away.
- 2) To cause a person to begin to distrust and desert one whom he ought to trust and obey. To be offended in one, i.e. to see in another what I disapprove of and what hinders me from acknowledging his authority. To cause one to judge unfavourably or unjustly of another.

It is the first set of definitions that is spoken of in Matthew 18; if there should be anything or anyone that would seek to cause us to stumble, that would seek to entice us to sin, we must sever the connection immediately if we would preserve our faith. It is this type of "offending" that Paul speaks of, when he says he will eat no flesh lest he cause his brother, weaker in the faith, to be offended. While we have the victory, we are not invited to presumption; we cannot dwell on enchanted ground and expect Yahweh to intervene, any more than He did for Eve.

It is the second set of definitions that is most useful for us to examine in the context of the message tonight; it is here that it more clearly allows heart reflection. If we would know whether we are on the path to becoming offended at our brethren, and following those who "went out from among us," let us consider such questions as these:

Do I lack trust towards someone in the faith because of something they have said or done?

Has this tempted me to "desert" them, or pull back from following their teaching and example?

Have I seen or heard something from them that did not meet my expectations; that I disapprove of or disagree with?

Have I manifest the fruit of not rendering proper respect to their authority, spiritual or otherwise?

Have I spoken words that would cause others to judge them unfavorably?

If the answer to these is "yes," then there is something to resolve; the weeds of resentment have already begun to take root.

"To cause one to judge unfavorably or unjustly of another" is the very definition of a violation of gospel order; it is the motivation that causes one to backbite, to lay bare their brother or sister before others. When one is offended, they will seek to spread that offence; when words are spoken that are intended not to build up a seemingly faltering soul, but rather to lay their errors bare, then this is nothing other than to cause one to judge another unfavorably. This is to "offend," and it is written: "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend,

and them which do iniquity. And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matthew 13:40-43)

Let each one of us examine our own selves, whether our hearts be free of offence. For those who will take the requisite steps of repentance and gospel order, there is healing and perfect unity; for it is truly promised, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." (Psalms 119:165)

Let us shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of our Father, being found as pure wheat in this time during which "many shall be offended."

Are there any questions or comments on the study tonight?

Zahakiel: C

Lucan: Go ahead

Zahakiel: Thank you for tonight's study. A number of things came to mind as I was reading... and one of them is this... The people of Yah are educated in the ways of righteousness. As such, Satan will rarely attempt to ensnare them with the "obvious" sins. At least, he will not expect to have much success there. Instead...he tries to manipulate the subtle emotions of the heart, to insert the apparently harmless thoughts, and then nurture these small errors until they become disasters as great as any that would be caused by the overt transgressions. Studies like this give us tools with which we can "examine ourselves," because that's an easy enough instruction to read, but how to do it becomes more important as the methods used by the enemies of our souls become more ferocious near the end. May Yah bless all who read this study with understanding, that we may more fully receive the protection that our Father has provided for us through His Word. End.

Adriel777: c

Lucan: Go ahead

Adriel777: I have been reading Great Controversy about the Reformation and the great offense the Papacy took against the pure teaching of the Gospel and the humble noble preachers of it. End for now. End

Lucan: Are there any other comments?

Elyna: Q

Lucan: Go ahead

Elyna: Danielle: How to end up sitting at a table eating with someone that did evil to you? (Note: she is not quite in agreement with our explanation of the last passage we

read...Someone hurt her badly, and she is not forgiving and like this person again.) End (I have explained to her many times before that she needs to be born again. End.)

Zahakiel: A

Lucan: Go ahead

Zahakiel: I think your description of her "need" is correct. The simple answer is, when we have accepted Christ, His love fills us. When we are filled with His love, it becomes natural that this love is extended to others. We do not want to focus on what to "do" or "not do" with regard to specific behaviors (unless they are direct transgressions) but rather on the Faith of Yahshua that guides us. If we are offended with someone so that we find it difficult to be in their presence, we need to examine what it is in us that is reacting so harshly. If it is because of past offenses, then we have a fear of being offended again. Faith in Christ means that we are trusting in His protection, and so we have nothing to fear from others. It may be sensible not to go close to someone who is in a habit of abusing us... but if we need to be in their presence, we are not consumed with negative emotions. Instead, we may see it as an opportunity to share Christ's love with one who needs it. But the important thing is that in us, when we are in Christ, He is our trust, and He is our joy, not what someone who is sitting beside us has done, or may do.

Zahakiel: End.

Pastor Chick: C

Lucan: Go ahead

Pastor Chick: If a person is actually "evil", I have no desire to sit down to eat (commune) with them...light has no fellowship with darkness, but deciding if someone is truly evil might be the tricky part. END

Elyna: C

Lucan: Go ahead

Elyna: She says thanks, and said amen to Pastor's comment. She was abused and that is why she likes Pastor's answer. End (However, the thoughts of the past things must not control one's life. She thinks she needs another type of therapy to heal from that, not medication. She lives almost every day with what happened to her. She needs healing from that.) End

Pastor Chick: A

Lucan: Go ahead

Pastor Chick: From the earliest years of my life, I recall mental, physical, and sexual abuse from both my mother, and especially my father. It was not until I was made new by Yah's Spirit that I could love them and forgive them. I finally realized they were SICK and steeped in sin, being pawns of Satan. They could not be righteous because they were

sinners, and Christ died for sinners. I came to be healed after their death, so I never had the opportunity to speak my heart to them. I hope they made peace with God before they expired, because, in spite of the many years of abuse, I love them for Christ's sake. END.

Adriel777: C

Lucan: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Lucan: Go ahead

Elyna: Amen

Adriel777: Amen. My story is very similar to Pastors except that because of my mother's untimely death at my father's hands due to an unfortunate gun accident and his subsequent drinking, (we were taken from my father) my mental, physical and sexual abusers were "Foster" parents. They also died before I came to Christ, but I have forgiven them as well, realizing that as Pastor said they were being used as pawns of Satan. Satan doesn't care if we hate and blame God because of what happened to us or if we hate our abusers the result is the same... a life of misery and sorrow here and a loss of eternal life hereafter. We must fall on the Rock and be broken and cry out as Yahshua and Stephen did - Father forgive them for they know not what they do. End

Elyna: Amen. C

Lucan: Go ahead

Elyna: She says she forgives him but would not maintain any relationship with her abuser. End. Note: but she talks about that all the time. That is a snare as Sis Jody says. She seems to take pleasure in talking about how evil these people were to her. Please pray for her deliverance. End.

Adriel777: Q

Lucan: Go ahead

Adriel777: For Sis Guerline - Was this recent?

Elyna: A

Lucan: Go ahead

Elyna: Some years like 9 years ago. Not recent.

Adriel777: C

Elyna: She was abused many times. End

Lucan: Go ahead

Adriel777: Well mine has been close to 40-50 years ago now, but for many years after I told everyone I met my "whole life story" because I felt they needed to know why I was messed up...I have not needed to tell that story for some time and in fact there are many people now who know me and don't know...I don't think she needs to maintain a relationship with that person. And I will be praying for her. End

Elyna: (Thank you) C.

Lucan: Go ahead

Adriel777: (you're welcome)

Elyna: It is hard to understand that, having not suffered the same. Thanks. End.

Lucan: Are there any other comments? If not, I'll ask Pastor to close with prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in Heaven we thank You for your forgiveness and protection from offences. May this Sabbath continue to remind us of Your faithfulness to all Your children. We seek more and still more of Your Spirit, as we pray in the holy and precious name of Yahshua, Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Barb: Amen

nattie: Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

daphna dee: Amen

Peter_Jr_18: Amen

Elyna: Danielle: Amen