

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

Pastor Chick: Dear Heavenly Father. We come before You expecting a special blessing all the while, hundreds and perhaps thousands are in peril in Texas as the result of the raging storm. Have mercy on all who are in danger and may we who are blessed be responsible to extend our blessings to others as we are able. Pour wisdom from above upon Your people. In Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

Barb: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

Elyna: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Naraiel: Amen

Adriel777: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Marie: Amen

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath to everyone.

gadriel: Amen, Amen

Zahakiel: Tonight's study is a fairly simple one, and yet I believe it has the potential to be very useful. A number of years ago, I believe it was on a New Moon, we examined some of the distinctive doctrines of Adventism, comparing them to some of the counterfeits taught in the various churches of Christendom. We saw that in every case, the true doctrine, the one that arises from the plainest possible reading of the Scriptures, more closely reflects the revealed character of Yah than the false. Tonight, I want to do something similar, but this time, I want to explain a little more closely how that closeness to Yah's character in His teachings, that better reflection of the truth of our Father, affects us directly. As such, tonight's study is called "Better Things."

We have seen, many times, that each doctrine that is revealed by the Bible is like the center of a road, and sometimes a very narrow road. In an attempt to keep Yah's people, and the world in general, in ignorance of saving knowledge, Satan pushes people to one side or the other of that narrow road. Unfortunately, because most of the world is on one side or the other (and therefore off) the narrow road of truth, the truly balanced position inevitably seems like an extreme one. This is why Yah's people are always small, obscure, and subject to persecution by those in positions of earthly authority.

The Scriptures tell us "Yah is Love," (1John 4:8) and as such, all that He is, and all that He does, is calculated with infinite wisdom to do that which is best for all people under all circumstances. It is not always that which is "pleasant" or that which is "convenient," but it is just. It is written,

"For the grace of Yah that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Yahshua the Messiah; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:11-14) Let me know when you've read this.

Naraiel: F

Adriel777: F

Elyna: F

Lucan: F

daphna dee: F

Zahakiel: This is, in essence, Adventism. It is the acceptance of the Gospel, followed by an eager awaiting of Yahshua's return, while at the same time permitting Him to "redeem us from all iniquity and purify" us by submitting to His work in our lives, and choosing to respond to all circumstances according to His divine character.

Doctrine, as we use the term, indicates a teaching that reveals the truth about our Father, and this process of cleansing us from iniquity. It is what we believe collectively, and what we teach as Yah's revealed message to humanity through His Church.

As far as I can tell, there is not a single "doctrine" on which all Churches that claim to be Christ's agree, including the most basic concepts, such as what He says about the Law, what His death means, and how we ought to treat our fellow human beings. And yet, if we use His character as a guide, we can always be sure that we have a proper interpretation and understanding of all that is written.

To put it very simply, true doctrine is always more loving, more sanctifying, and just plain "better," than any possible counterfeit. Specifically it is better for US, because the stated reason for our Father's commandments – every one of them – is "that it might be well with [us] and with [our] children forever." (Deu. 5:29)

Let's look at the Sabbath, since as Seventh-day Adventists, it is one of the doctrines that Yah specifically instructed us to glorify. The Sabbath, in its literal application, is an appointed time. It is a twenty-four hour period that has been set aside from the rest of the week for a specific purpose. It is written, "And Elohim blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." (Gen. 2:3) With those simple words, any possible controversy is actually ended. There should be no question of whether or not a Church has the authority to alter the Sabbath, moving it from the seventh to the first day. There should be no question of whether or not we are given the authority to choose our own day of rest. There should be no question of whether or not Christ's death somehow altered the Sabbath.

Elohim blessed the Sabbath day... He made it joyful... and then He sanctified it. He made it holy. This is an act that predates Moses and the written description of the Law, and has

nothing at all to do with man's actions. This is purely an act of Yahweh, to make a period of time holy by His own power and authority, and nothing we can do, or leave undone, has the power to remove or change that act. We do not make Friday at sunset to Saturday at sunset "a Sabbath," "our Sabbath," or even "the Sabbath." It is not in us to make or unmake it. Yah has made the Sabbath, and we honor Him when we "remember" it and "keep it holy" by acknowledging the holiness that Yah has placed within it, and thus we are blessed.

Both the Old and New Testaments speak of resting on the Sabbath day. Both Testaments describe the blessings of entering into Yah's rest on the day that He has set apart for that purpose. (Isa. 58:13, 14; Heb. 4:4-11) It is better to spend this time with Yah than to neglect to do so. It is better to honor the "sanctification" placed on the Sabbath than to choose (either as an institution or an individual) some other day of which the Bible speaks nothing regarding rest or holiness. While we are always blessed when we worship Yah in spirit and in truth, and that on every day of our lives, the blessing of the Sabbath is to "enter into His rest," not merely to rest ourselves, and this special unity is necessary for the perfection of our character after the order of His Son.

The Sabbath commandment, as it is written in the Bible, is better – plain and simple – than Sunday-sacredness, regardless of the reason individual Churches may have used to justify their rejection of the fourth commandment.

What about the state of the dead? Seventh-day Adventists understand this differently than most other Churches. The Scriptures tell us that those who die in Christ "sleep." (John 11:11) They enter into "hell," which is the grave, and await the resurrection. Paul, in describing the last days, says,

"...we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not [go before] them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of Yahweh, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1Th 4:15-18) Let me know when you've read this passage.

Pastor Chick: F

Barb: F

Adriel777: F

daphna dee: f

Elyna: F

Zahakiel: To those questioning what had happened to their dear and departed, Paul tells them not to be concerned, for they will rise, and we will ascend to Yahshua together and so (in that way) be with Him. This is how we shall be with Him, not in some disembodied

form before. He then says, "Comfort one another with these words." Unfortunately, if one were to go to a funeral held by almost every religion on earth calling itself Christian, it is not "these words" that would be heard. No, other words, of another character, are heard. The grieving are told, "Your loved one is in Heaven right now, watching over you," or "They are in a better place." How much better would it be, if they were to comfort one another with the words that Paul has given to us for just such an occasion?

Death is the enemy of mankind. It is not the doorway to a better place. It is only when death is defeated, and cast into the lake of fire, that life triumphs and all sorrows come to an end. (1Cor 15:26) It would be better if the loss of a loved one were not covered over with falsehood...but the truth is more loving, more pleasant. The lost loved one will experience very little time away from us. One moment their eyes close, and the next they are beholding Yahshua in the presence of all their faithful friends and family, never more to part. We, who await the reunion, spend our days helping others to experience this wonderful event with joy and holiness, so that there will be more "friends and family" to unite with us in the celebration. Is this not, again, very simply, "better" than the idea of our departed ones separated from us, seeing us undergoing toil and trials, and then coming down again to be reunited with bodies that they once discarded, and apparently do not actually need to experience the presence of Yah?

Consider the health message. Yah has given us foods to enjoy that restore and maintain health. He has said that certain things are good for us, and others are not. Many who claim to be Christ's teach very different things about diet than the Word. Peter, after spending years hearing the teachings of Christ, understood that there were still such things as "unclean meats." (Acts 10:14) Isaiah, in his predictions of the very last days, speaks of those who defile themselves when they "eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels." (Isa 65:4)

Yes, some of these things are written before the Gospels, but they speak of our day, and we ought not to be ignorant of our Father's Word concerning us. Of course, diet is only one aspect of our Father's plan for our best health and earthly experience.

While many Christians say, "We must focus on the spirit," and "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink," (Rom 14:17) is it not better if we honor Yah with all that we eat, drink, and whatsoever we do? (1Cor 10:31) Yah's Kingdom is not about food and drink, that is true, and yet there is no contradiction when we are instructed to honor the Temple of the Holy Spirit, which we are both individually (as bodies into which He has placed that Spirit) and collectively (as a Church to which and through which He speaks).

And while any Adventist knows these things to be the very "milk" of the Gospel, let us make sure we understand why these things are so, and then explain it to others as a sign of Yah's love. We may do this with any doctrine. Not only may we show that it is more "correct" to the written Word of Yah, but we may submit to it with our "reasonable

service,” with our logical minds, because we can see the benefits to us – body, mind and spirit – as the reason why the commandment was given.

Yah is love. His intentions toward us are loving. He speaks nothing arbitrarily, merely to “test” us and see if we will obey. Any trial to which He subjects us is our opportunity to triumph over the Enemy, and His occasion to show us to the universe as an example of what His Love accomplishes even within one who dwells in fragile, sinful flesh. What an honor it is, how our Father honors us, when we, through faith, overcome temptation, and know that it is Christ in us, the hope of glory, that has overcome.

Adriel777: Amen

What our Father has given to us by way of instruction, in each and every occasion, is better, far better, than anything the human mind may devise, or that the devils may inspire us to produce. Let me conclude with one more.

Yah has given us a faith. He has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. And then, He has given us a name. Not only does He have a name reserved for each of us in the world to come, but while we are here in this final generation, He has given us a name by which we may be called, a distinctive banner to hold before the world... and (as with everything else we have examined tonight) it is better, far better, than anything man’s wisdom could devise.

There are some who call themselves the “Church of God,” and others who call themselves, “Roman Catholics,” or “Baptists,” or “Anglicans,” or various other titles. What do these things mean? Any Church is supposed to be “of God,” and “of Christ,” and there are many who lay claim to it in both title and meaning. Various other names point to a seat of human government or some earthly activity. What our Father has always done is chosen a name that is appropriate for His purposes. He has called Abram Abraham and Jacob Israel. These were important for the testimony they were to give.

In this last generation, Yah has called His people Seventh-day Adventists, and then Creation Seventh Day Adventists, because the testimony indicated by these words is what He desires His people reveal openly to the world. It is intended to convict the inquiring mind, to let them know that there are a people who believe in Yah’s first creative acts (the universe) and His last creative acts (the born-again heart). We are a people who honor the Ten Commandments, in a day when not only the fourth, but often many others, are being openly violated by those who call themselves Christ’s people. We are a people who, as I began the study by saying, are eagerly awaiting the return of Christ, having accepted the Gospel, and who are standing in the light of judgment, being prepared through the perfecting of faith and character for that most blessed event.

It is better to have a name than to have no name. It is better to have the name Yah has inspired than to have one of our own creation, or that civil authority would "permit" us to have. It is better to have a name that points to the doctrines critical for our understanding of Yah's blessings toward us. It is better to have a name that reveals the key elements of our faith right up front. It is better to have a name (to be perfectly frank) that Satan seems intent on silencing, for the resulting controversy reveals his character, our character, and the divine character.

Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will understand. Those who seek the Kingdom of Yah and His righteousness above their earthly well-being, position, and comfort zones will understand. When I read of the trademark lawsuits that the Enemy, through his earthly agents, instigated against the people who stand under this banner, I understood. If it were not for the name "Creation Seventh Day Adventist," I would not, today, BE a Creation Seventh Day Adventist, having accepted the Gospel, having become a new Creation, and having come into conformity with the Law while awaiting the soon return of Yahweh's Son.

All that Yah does is for the best good of the universe in general, and humanity in particular. Every Word He has sent to us has been for the salvation of sinners, and for their transformation into saints, so that He may raise us out of the darkness of sin, and give us an inheritance. And that inheritance is better, a far, far better thing, than anything else we may seek to obtain, indeed, far better than anything we might imagine.

Adriel777: Amen!

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

Lucan: C

Zahakiel: Go ahead.

Lucan: Yah's laws are immutable, and, that includes the law of cause and effect... **Lucan:** I have had some opportunities with a new batch of workers recently to answer questions about my faith. And, inevitably, one of those is "What's the difference in you and the generic Christian?" Or, "generic Church," depending... I find that, at least in Seattle, people asking that have a very vague understanding of even what a generic church is, or what words like "doctrine" mean. So, I rarely have reason to get into the theological side. But, what they all understand is cause and effect. Diet laws, for example... certainly there are spiritual benefits to following Yah's plan in this regard. But, when someone ceases eating what is bad for them, and begins eating what is good for them, it doesn't take a sermon to tell the difference. They can, quite literally, "see and taste that Yah is good..." I do find a blessing in reviewing the "effects" of the good instructions and truths Yah has given us. What I find myself telling people when they ask, however, isn't about the doctrinal truths CSDAs have. Those are quite good, but, I became a CSDA in heart long

before I knew the majority of them. It was simply accepting that Yah's word means what it says, including those promises of unity, keeping us from sin, guiding us into all truth, etc. I have been blessed to find a people that, when right, find blessing in it, and when wrong, acknowledge it eagerly in order to become right. But, "right and wrong" isn't salvation... They come out of salvation. I have seen little interest among those I've spoken to of these things. But, everyone understands love - love for one another, love for Yahweh, love for the truth. And, when they can see the "cause and effect" Yahweh has put into place to bless them, then they can see that love for themselves. And perhaps, with much prayer, some who encounter us will even "know us by our love," and decide it is worth all to have it. <End.>

Zahakiel: Thank you for sharing that. Are there any others with thoughts to share?

Adriel777: Amen

Zahakiel: All right, if not then I will ask Bro. Luke to offer a closing prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for the blessing of the Sabbath hours. We are thankful for a season of rest and peace, even as the world around us stirs in turmoil. We know that our rest in you, and the unrest of those who do not know you, will only continue to grow. May we be blessed with opportunities to share your rest with those in need. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Barb: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

daphna dee: Amen