

Zahakiel: Almighty Father in Heaven, we give you our thanks for another week of blessings, of sanctification, and of guidance by your Spirit. As we draw near to you this Sabbath, may your peace that surpasses all understanding rest upon us, so that we may rise up to serve you with our might in the days ahead. May hearts and minds be open to the message from your Throne tonight, for we ask this in Yahshua's name. Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Ruth: Amen

Barb: Amen

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath, everyone. As is often the case, this week I had the idea for one study in mind, but I was awakened one morning with a thought from Yah fully formed, and I felt led to write a study describing it. This is called "From Fear to Faith."

It ought to be clear to even a casual student of the Bible that the love of righteousness is a necessary "ingredient" in salvation. It is an obvious and manifest portion of the "mind of Christ" that every believer receives upon conversion. As the Scriptures indicate, there are "few" who actually possess this divine mind, and sadly this is the case even among those who claim to be the Messiah's followers.

Despite the lack of this critical element, the love of righteousness as expressed through the mind of Christ, almost everyone who knows of the Gospel has a desire to be saved. They may not understand all that this entails. They may view it as an escape from condemnation, and the gift of everlasting life... and salvation does involve these things. But at its core, salvation is a transformation. It is the true reckoning with the wages of sin being death... allowing the carnal "self" to die, so that Christ in us, the hope of glory, arises in its place.

For many, however, this part, this main aspect, is theoretical at best, and their desire to "do what the Bible says," and perform the works of Christianity is actually a carnal instinct, one founded in fear of loss and punishment.

The flesh, quite naturally, seeks to preserve itself. Everything that lives is designed to keep on living, and there is nothing abnormal about that. When one form of life endangers another, however, there is a conflict. Many microbes cause diseases in humans, and so we seek to eliminate them from our bodies. Insects and other pests may invade our homes, and we exterminate them.

In the same way, the carnal mind is a "life" that seeks to preserve itself, but it can only do so at the expense of the true, spiritual Person that the Father created to exist in His

image. The Gospel is the means by which this corrupt and deficient form of life, one doomed to destruction anyway, is removed in order for that which is pure and perfect to stand in its place.

The flesh is in a desperate condition. It wishes to endure, and yet it cannot receive the things of Yah by which everlasting life may be attained. Quite correctly did Paul write of the misery of being trapped in this contradiction... There is a desire, however self-serving, to obey the Law, and to follow what conscience and education have indicated is the right path, and yet instinct and impulse prove to be impossible for the mind set on the things of the world to overcome. Satan has an effective weapon against every form of "seed" that Yah has sown in the earth, whether it is stony ground, dry earth, weeds, or the birds of the air. (Mat 13:3-8)

Well might those who hear the testimony of those who appear to be at spiritual peace cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37)

Well might they seek to discover the "secret" of the true Sabbath rest because, try as they might, the mind set on the flesh cannot figure it out. Fear drives the carnal mind to seek salvation, and yet fear has nothing to do with the Faith of Yahshua that saves. That faith, after all, is founded upon Agape love, that casts out all fear.

Imagine, then, if someone – not yet converted – were to hear the Gospel, the message of the CSDA Church. We teach, revealing from the Bible, that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," and "the righteousness which is of faith." This is the gift of Yah, a life of righteousness that does not appear because of effort or trial-and-error, but because we believe what the Father has said to us, and we believe what the Son also believes.

When one who lives according to the flesh hears these words, desiring salvation but deceived by the flesh and the flesh's past experiences into thinking it is impossible, they are trapped. They are trapped, because they know that their fear of judgment is what is motivating them to pay attention to messages like the investigative judgment, and the close of probation. They cannot dismiss the light that comes forth from these doctrines, nor the sense of urgency that may arise from the inspiration of the messenger and a pricked conscience, but they also know that fear is not the right motive, and will not kill sin in the heart. Should they decide to "do" all the right things to avoid punishment, they will end up living in a works-based mindset even while outwardly practicing a religion of faith. They may be tempted to despair, to wonder if others are having similar experiences, and then Satan will use suspicion, envy, and their continuing fear to take them even further from the Way that they cannot, to their grief, appear to find. They will be alone, even in the midst of fellowship.

So, what do they do? The answer, of course, is to overcome their fear. The important step they must make is coming to a decision not to fear the judgment of Yahweh. But... this step is just as impossible as any other aspect of salvation. Here is where Yah, and the

grace He has revealed to all mankind, causes those who seek to find, and those who knock to see the door answered unto them.

This begins with a very simple realization. The fact is this: regardless of the motive that first drew their attention to the faith of Yahshua, if they did not run from the truth as they had begun to understand it, if they did not reject or dismiss it, then they will find themselves in the presence of the King and the Savior. They are there, not because they fear judgment, ultimately... many fear judgment and never hear the Gospel. They are there because the Father loves them, and has permitted them to come into the presence of His Son, and the Bride of His Son. They are there because Yah is calling to them, and their fear is but a tool, however unusual, that He is using to draw their heart to His in perfect, and pure love.

Consider that the Scriptures say some shall be saved by fear. (Jude 1:23)

The Righteous Jews who felt conviction for the corporate accountability they endured under the Sanhedrin were "pricked in their hearts." It does not say they immediately came to love the character of Yah as revealed in Yahshua; rather, they were stung by an awakening conscience, and were driven to acknowledge their guilt, as stated in that verse from Acts 2 that I mentioned a little while ago. Still others were recorded in the New Testament saying, in anguish of soul, "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30)

It was not the immediate love of righteousness that motivated these utterances, but a desire to avoid judgment, and to be preserved from the Wrath of Yah. This motive, this sensation, this desire to escape judgment, of course this is not what saves. This was my motive for joining the mainstream SDA Church years ago, as it is for many, and it does not last.

And yet, salvation is not by me, and not by my works... it is the Father who saves us, through His Son, and by His Holy Spirit. Because I chose not to ignore my conscience, and those things that I felt, Yah placed me in a path, and drew me to His disciples in the due course of His time, who could teach me the truth without mixture, and facilitate my conversion from a sinner to a saint. That involved, to a large degree, converting the fear of judgment to the faith of Yahshua.

How did this miracle happen? It was an act of Yahweh entirely beyond my control. For my part, what I needed was a willingness to let my Creator, Judge, and now Father and Savior, convert the flesh to the spirit, the mind of carnality to the mind of Christ. I needed to submit to the steps necessary for conversion as outlined by the inspiration of the Almighty: Repentance, Faith, and Baptism. The order is important. Repentance is first, before Faith and Baptism. There is a reason for that, and it must be that way.

To some it might seem that faith should come first, that it should be Faith, then Repentance, and then Baptism. While that makes a certain kind of sense, the Father

knows that this is impossible for us. One cannot practice the science of salvation unless one is already saved. One cannot have the Faith of Yahshua while being guilty of sin. One cannot truly believe the promises of Yahweh, and live according to those promises, while motivated by fear, even the fear of Yah's own judgment.

And thus, He draws us to Him by HIS own power, knowing that we cannot do it ourselves. He drives us by whatsoever tools are effective... those that speak to the flesh. These are conscience, self-preservation, even the condemnatory thoughts of the demons that oppress us, and they may bring us to our knees in sorrow. But once we are there, by whatsoever method that is necessary for our individual cases, He tells us, "Fear not." It is then we must have the realization. It is He who has permitted our trials. It is He who has pricked our conscience by the mysterious movements of His Spirit. It is He who knows that at that point we are not yet saved, but He has extended His grace to us that we might choose indeed to be so.

And so, the first step to conversion is Repentance. We must choose to acknowledge that we have transgressed a holy and just Law, and despised the affection of our Heavenly Father. We must accept the reality of a life of wrongdoing, and understand that, because we have eaten the fruit of sin, as it was said to Adam, "You shall surely die." (Gen 2:17) We must confess that we do not even have the right motives for asking for mercy, except for pure, total need. And then, in that moment of honesty, Yah's mercy becomes effective. Once we have had this true repentance, which involves both confessing and putting away the sin, it is written "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1John 1:9)

That verse is, I believe, one of the most important in the New Testament when it comes to describing what repentance truly entails. Forgiveness is important, necessary, but for the purpose of obtaining salvation it is the "cleansing" that is actually the significant part, to which the forgiveness is actually the means, not the end. When we are clean, then faith may take residence in our minds. When we have acknowledged the sin, then... well, let us read Paul's words on this:

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Yahshua, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Yahshua hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." (Rom 8:1-5)

This is the immediate result of true repentance. This is what it means to be cleansed from all unrighteousness. One does not need to wait for the acceptance of Yahweh. It is there, eager to be received. And whether one comes to repentance by fear, or by guilt... remember, nobody can come to Yahweh in holiness. Nobody can fall before the Father and

Son for the first time with a pure heart and right motives. Yahshua came into the world to save sinners, a label that may be applied equally to every human who ever lived.

So then, whether one comes to the foot of the Cross by fear, or guilt, if they will leave their burden there, if they will believe that Yah has called them even in their sinful condition, then they may arise a new creature, one who has had that fear taken away, and an emboldening faith placed within instead.

Let none who are concerned about the judgment of Yahweh hesitate because they fear their motives are impure. Let none who have kept themselves away from the Father's loving heart, the life He has for them, and the fellowship of His saints, stand at the door as if they were not invited to the Wedding Feast of The Lamb. They need not worry that their garments are filthy, for the Master has provided the proper garments Himself. He brings us in, not because we are clean, but because He wishes to cleanse us. He brings us in, fearful, angry, sorrowful... all these things from the mind of the flesh. And yet, because we are willing to come, and because we honestly confess our sins, he receives our repentance, and gives us His faith instead. There is the transformation... it is something He does, not something we do, or can possibly ever do.

There is repentance, and then faith, and then... there is baptism. Then there is the unity that is possible because the faith has replaced the fear and other carnal motivations. This is when conversion has taken place.

So this I say, then, to those who hear these words, and for the saints to know as they bear the Three Angels' Message to the world in the power and glory of the Fourth: Fear not. Fear not, and teach others not to fear, for our message is one of acceptance, hope, and joy. There is joy, and rest, and peace, even in the time of judgment. Let those who hear the "impossible" standard of righteousness by faith recognize that they cannot have the Faith of Yahshua, nor the love for righteousness, when they first hear that Word. They are not expected to... that is why Yah gives it to them, and has sent them the message they hear. Then, as they hear that Gospel, the unadulterated message of Victory over Sin through Christ's indwelling and resurrected power in us, they are called to account. Their names come up before Heaven, not for condemnation, (they were condemned by their own sins already) but for blessing. They are given, as Peter says, "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." (1 Pet 1:3) They ask for these things out of the recognition of their need, and they receive it out of faith that is then given to them. Having received these gifts at that point, through no power of their own, they may choose to leave the flesh behind, to drive it into the grave, and to rise as new creatures.

Those who find themselves bound up, fearing judgment, and not knowing how to love righteousness, let the word of Yah to them be: Fear Not.

Yahshua is He who has come, and died, and been raised again, "to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." (Luke 4:18)

Yahshua came to set the captives free, of which we all once were.

Acknowledge, first of all, your sin, for repentance must come before faith. Admit your life of faithlessness, pride, and failure. Yahweh already knows all these things, but for grace and boundless courtesy He asks, as He asked of Adam, His very first question: "Where are you?" Tell Him where you are. Ask for forgiveness, knowing that one without forgiveness is one without hope. And then recognize that you are here because Yah called you to be here. Pray, then, for that transforming miracle. Shall Yah not give gifts unto those who ask Him, and who begin to ask Him in faith?

Adriel777: Amen

Zahakiel: Ask and you shall receive, even the very transformation of your motives, from fear to faith. It is by prayer that faith will arise from the dead body of self. It is by prayer that we receive Christ truly, and see our lives made perfect according to His character, and the will of the Father. It is repentance, and then faith, that lead ultimately to baptism, to unity with the Father, Son and Their People, and that provides us with a life from which we can say that we rejoice in the salvation we have been offered. We return that life faithfully to our Savior with our willing obedience, and the love of the righteousness that is now ours by the faith of Yahshua, that faith which we now share as His joyful, victorious children.

Are there any questions or comments about tonight's study? If there are none, then I'll ask Bro. Luke to offer a closing prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We thank you that, having confessed our sins, you have been faithful to forgive them and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We thank you for calling us each from lives of sin and self-indulgence, and making us accepted in the beloved. As your Son continues to plead His blood as our High Priest, may we be blessed with boldness as we go forth to call others to your great mercy... In the name of Yahshua we pray, amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Barb: Amen PC Amen

Adriel777: Amen

Elyna: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Naraiel: Amen

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

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