

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

Naraiel: Hello Sis. Barb.

Zahakiel: Dear Father in Heaven, We come before your Throne to worship you in Spirit and in Truth, resting from the labors of this past week, and drawing near to your loving heart. Bless our time of fellowship; may we be sanctified and refreshed by the power of your Word, as we ask it in Yahshua's name. Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Barb: Amen

Lucan: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Adriel777: Amen

Elyna: Amen

Lucan: We read in the creation account:

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17)

In our study last week, Bro. David pointed out that we are saved from death in the same way in which we fell to it; first in Spirit, then in mind, then in body. That is to say, Adam did not die in his flesh when he ate the fruit; rather, we read:

"And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died."
(Genesis 5:5)

It may be asked, in what way did the serpent then lie?

We read:

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:" (Genesis 3:4)

Now, it is true that eventually, Adam and Eve died; and it is true that this process of death began the moment they were separated from Yahweh by sin. Thus they were appointed to die that day; but Yahweh did not say, "in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely be appointed to die." No; He said, "in the day ... thou shalt surely die."

From the perspective of the physical, it would seem true that Adam did not surely die that day; from the perspective of the flesh, it would seem false that Adam "surely died" in the day that he ate. He lived for 930 years, after all, and while we don't know how old he was when he ate the fruit, we know he lived after the fall long enough to "begat sons and daughters" (Genesis 5:4).

We may note that neither Yahweh nor Satan qualify their statements in the slightest; there is no mention of "flesh" or "mind" or "spirit" found. Yet we say, and rightly, that Satan lied to Eve in the garden. How is this so? Adam died the day he ate the fruit; as a sinless spiritual being, his existence ended. To Yahweh, this was and is the only death that truly matters.

This is the essence of conviction; that to do something against our convictions would be to "unmake us," and is practically impossible. Thus, we "cannot commit sin."

Adam continued his physical existence for centuries after his spiritual death; to Satan, this was and is the only life that matters. Yahweh speaks of the spiritual as the truth; Satan seeks to direct us to the flesh as the truth. In terms of physical death, Yahweh does not consider this final, but rather speaks in terms of "sleep":

"While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's [house], saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master... And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead." (Luke 8:49, 52, 53)

To the mind set on the flesh, to call a physically dead person "sleeping" is absurd. To the mind set on the flesh, to call a physically living person "dead" is absurd. Yet our mind is not set on the physical, even as Christ's was not on the physical.

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. 2:16)

We see how this shows itself in the testimony of Yahweh, whether to Adam at the creation or by Christ at the redemption. Yahweh speaks of the spiritual as the truth – the only truth worth mentioning, the one that is relevant now and forever. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, [they] are spirit, and [they] are life." (John 6:63)

What is the truth that we, as His servants, speak? When the flesh is despondent, or weak, or challenged, or abused, what is the truth? If we speak of the experiences of the flesh as the truth, do we not speak as Satan did to Eve? This is to echo the perspective of the first liar, and declare that "ye shall not surely have the promises" because the flesh does not perceive them.

"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12:10)

This question – flesh or Spirit – reaches back to the very origins of sin. Of which do we speak? Of which do we testify? Which do we serve and live and walk according unto?

“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. For to be carnally minded [is] death; but to be spiritually minded [is] life and peace.” (Romans 8:5, 6)

The lies of Satan have influence only inasmuch as they incorporate and pervert the truth. The truth that Satan frequently seeks to pervert is that of the experiences of the flesh. Even as Adam’s body did not die immediately, our own flesh does not respond to the truth of Yahweh’s promises immediately. The emotions, the inclinations, the perceptions are at hand to deceive and mislead only if one is lead to look at them as indicators of the truth. Yet while it is true that we experience and feel many things, those things themselves are not Truth; they are not who or what we are. Adam’s flesh told him that he was living while he was spiritually dead. Our flesh tells us we are spiritually dead when by Yah’s grace, we are living.

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” (John 17:17)

To the mind set on the spiritual, to call a spiritually dead person “alive” is absurd.
To the mind set on the spiritual, to call a spiritually living person “dead” is absurd.

Let us remember these things well when considering the physical death of loved ones; we may often be called to “let the dead bury their dead. Yet to speak of our flesh as the reality is to do nothing other than to speak of the spiritually living as though they were dead. Where Satan once said “thou shalt not surely die,” he now says “thou shalt not surely live.”

The question in our testimony and in our lives is ultimately one of whose word we believe as truth, even as in Eden. When Yahweh speaks the truth of the Spirit, it is the truth entirely for we who walk after the Spirit, and are born of the Spirit. If we speak of the challenges and the temptations as the reality, we deny Christ, and speak as though we were among the dead.

“Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:9-11)

And again:

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

Yahweh does not reckon according to the flesh; to Him, it is accounted as nothing. The weakness of the flesh is irrelevant; Yahweh's strength is made perfect in weakness. The strength of the flesh is irrelevant; Yahweh's weakness is greater than the highest possibility of man's power.

It is written:

"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, [are called]: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, [yea], and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Cor. 1:25-29)

And again:

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2 Cor. 12:9)

By understanding and applying this in terms of salvation, we enter the Sabbath rest, and live in perfect trust of Christ's power to overcome within us. By understanding and applying this in terms of protection, we refuse to rely on the arm of flesh, and live in perfect trust of Christ's power to shield and avenge us. By understanding and applying this in terms of the life, we refuse to rely on the things of this earth, and live in perfect trust of Christ's power to provide for us all that we need.

The first of these is demonstrated in the gospel and victory over sin. The second of these is demonstrated in refusing to enforce, modify, or surrender religious observances by the civil power. The third of these is demonstrated in a matter we have spoken much of recently; that of "merchandise."

We read:

"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. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Tim. 6:6-10)

We know it is written that the love of money is the root of all evil; what is "money? From the physical perspective this may be an obvious question; from the spiritual perspective, perhaps less so. Ultimately, money is something used to acquire something else.

Modern riches take the form of bills and coins traded for goods and services. In some cases, the riches are themselves goods to be traded for other goods, such as wheat for cattle. Ultimately, however, money is simply a means to an end.

Yet Scripture here says that the root of all evil – not just some, or most evil – is the love of money. Notably, it does not say it is the love of the things acquired by money that is the root of all evil, but that of the money itself. Thus it is not the love of the ends necessarily, but of the perceived means of acquiring it. Of the things that money can acquire, we find written:

“Love not the world, neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” (1 John 2:15-17)

Yet even the love of the world is not the root of all evil; rather, it is “the love of money,” a love of the physical means of acquiring things. And why is this the root of all evil?

When money is seen as the means of acquiring things rather than Yahweh who gives the money, the things, the life, the body, and the means, the love is misplaced; the gift is made higher than the Giver.

This is the core spirit of idolatry, regardless of the manifestation. By looking to the physical reality of money, the spiritual – and only relevant – reality of Yah’s providence is set aside. We know that Yahweh owns the wealth in every mine, and that even the stones will cry out to accomplish His purposes if required. If looking to the things of the flesh – the daily, common things over which we are given responsibility – eclipses our view of the truth of the Spirit, we are in danger of “the root of all evil.”

The love of money may be demonstrated by prioritizing any physical thing over the spiritual. Those who trust in trademark laws over the promises and commands of Yahweh are guilty of “the love of money;” they have trusted in physical means rather than the spiritual truth. Those who dilute their testimony of Yahweh's power to dwell on temptations to the contrary are guilty of “the love of money;” they have trusted in physical senses rather than the spiritual truth. To love money is to love and seek after the things, means, and truths of the flesh as priority when Yahweh accounts these as “but dung.”

We read again:

“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” (1 Tim. 6:10)

The word for “coveted after” is “orego” in Greek, and rather interestingly, is not one generally meaning “to covet.” Of the three times it is used in Scripture, two are of positive

things; the word according to Strong's means: "to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something, to reach after or desire something." It is translated as "desire" regarding the office of a bishop of 1 Tim. 3:1; yet to reach one's self out, to stretch one's self to attain the physical is to view it as the reality, even as those who saw death as the reality, and laughed Yahshua to scorn for describing it as sleep. These lose sight of the truth that the physical are the things with which we have been entrusted for our spiritual development and that of others, and that all such things shall pass away shortly.

Of the end of money itself, we read:

"They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity." (Ezekiel 7:19)

Similarly, we may read of all of our spiritual gifts – that merchandise which Lucifer thought so highly of:

"Charity never faileth: but whether [there be] prophecies, they shall fail; whether [there be] tongues, they shall cease; whether [there be] knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Cor. 13:8-10)

When the flesh is viewed as "truth," be it our emotions influencing the testimony or our circumstances influencing the actions, the next logical step is to act in accordance with the flesh to attain the desired goal. Adam did so in eating the fruit; Adventists did so in wielding civil power.

Let us never do so with our words, for it is the first step towards the root of all such evils. Yahweh tells us instead what we are to "stretch ourselves out after," or "covet after," using the same word as in 1 Timothy:

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of [them], and embraced [them], and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that [country] from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire (Gk: oreo; 'stretch out after') a better [country], that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." (Hebrews 11:13-16)

May we who have received the promises, not afar off but in our very hearts, be found with the confession of those who have come before us.

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phil. 3:20)

Lucan: Are there any comments on the study tonight?

Adriel777: Amen

Lucan: If not, I'll ask Pastor to offer a closing prayer.

Elyna: Amen

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in Heaven. Thank You for the Truth as it is in Yahshua, the Living Word of God. Open the eyes of the blind to see the spiritual, and to live in the Spirit of holiness. In Yahshua's holy and precious name, Amen.

Barb: Amen

Adriel777: Amen

Elyna: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

daphna dee: Amen

Nattie: Amen.

Marie: Amen

Peter Jr 18: Amen.