

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

Zahakiel: Dear Father in Heaven, We give you thanks for the many blessings that have been ours in the past week, and we come before you with thanksgiving, for being both your creations and your re-creations. Bless us this Sabbath with your joyful presence, and may each receive the wisdom prepared from the foundation of the world, for we ask it in Yahshua's name. Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Elyna1: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Adriel777: Amen

Nattie: Amen.

Barb: Amen

Naraiel: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Lucan: The third angel's message is one that, as we have seen in recent studies, can be found in principle throughout the Scriptures. This message is a broad one, encompassing the first and second messages before it, and dealing with both the history and future of the people that bear it. Yet in discussing this message, and particularly its repetition under the fourth angel, it is other Adventists that often have the greatest difficulty understanding it.

That there is more to the Sabbath than the day it falls on is something lost on many, yet we see it well enough in Hebrews 4. That there is more to a false Sabbath than the day it falls on is something lost on almost all, yet we see it well enough in those that asked to break the legs of the Lord of the Sabbath before the oncoming sunset.

While studies showing the message for our current period of history have often focused on prophetic books, tonight we will be looking instead at the epistle of James. As such, our study is called "The Third Angel in James."

In this book we find several passages of great value to us in the closing hours of history. We may find the only Scripture that clearly identifies "temptation" as opposed to "sin," an understanding of critical value to those who walk according to the promises of Yahweh, that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." (1 John 3:9).

We find also the clearest statements of the relationship between faith and works, reading "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" (James 2:20)

Works are, then, an important element of salvation; but James does not dwell exclusively on the "letter of the law" when it comes to these works.

We know that the third angel's message deals with a conflict between the Sabbath of Yahweh and the false Sabbath of the beast. We also know that there is more to the

Sabbath than merely the hours it falls on; there is a spiritual, as well as literal, application of the commandments. It is this manner of application that James writes about most directly, saying "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [the Lord] of glory, with respect of persons." (James 2:1)

Now, which commandment is it that is violated through respect of persons? Certainly not one of the ten, not directly or in letter. The apostle continues to describe those who regard someone obviously wealthy with greater respect than someone obviously poor for several verses. He then concludes:

"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors." (James 2:8, 9)

It is not merely the outer showing of the Ten Commandments that James describes as "committing sin," and being "convinced of the law as transgressors." It is the core, underlying principle behind the commandments; the commandments upon which all the law and prophets hang. If one does not "love thy neighbor as thyself" to the fullest application, it is considered as truly a sin as anything graven in stone, from the Sabbath to bearing false witness. As the next Scriptures say:

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one [point], he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." (James 2:10-12)

Among Adventists, this verse has often been used to show that one may not claim obedience by keeping nine commandments, and omitting the fourth. This is a true application, yet it is often missed that James was not speaking of a specific one of the ten here at all. It may just as well say, "If thou keep not Sunday, but love not thy neighbor as thyself, thou art become a transgressor of the law."

These are not the ones of whom it is written, "Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." (Rev. 14:12)

To use the example James uses, if we have respect of persons, we are found guilty of not loving our neighbor as ourselves. It is not having respect for someone that is sin; it is having respect for someone because of something other than character, for superficial or false reasons. We do not love a poor brother if we treat them with relative contempt compared to one that is wealthy. We do not love our brethren if we treat one brother's preference as more valuable or important than others. We do not love our brethren if we take heed to the warnings of prophets because they are prophets, yet dismiss the concerns of those of less stature. All favoritism, partisanship, and partiality in judgment – whether for or against someone – is classified as sin. As it is written, "I charge [thee] before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." (1 Tim. 5:21)

And again, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, [and] easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." (James 3:17)

We know that Yahweh is no respecter of persons, but judges fairly and rightly according to character. We know that this extends not only to individuals, but to churches and nations also:

"O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay [is] in the potter's hand, so [are] ye in mine hand, O house of Israel And [at what] instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant [it]; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." (Jeremiah 18:6, 9-10)

Yahweh does not judge a people independently of their actual character and actions, nor does He ask us to do so. He does not gloss over sin and pronounce the unholy to be saints, nor does He ask us to do so. He does not regard as holy those who keep the seventh day, yet crucify Christ in the person of His saints; He positively forbids us to do so. For He that said, Remember the Sabbath day, said also, Love thy neighbor. Now if thou remember the Sabbath day, but deliver thy neighbor to prison for his faith, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

"For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment." (James 2:13)

"He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." (Revelation 13:10)

It is the patience of the saints that waits on Yahweh to avenge and take captive; it is the faith of the saints that He will protect His own people without the civil sword. It is this rest – this patience and faith – that underlies the Sabbath, and the seal of Yahweh.

A deception is on those who believe that they may persecute and jail their brethren freely, so long as they are not of the same religious organization, or denomination. The Scripture asks, "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?" (1 Cor. 6:1)

The Scriptures and the Testimonies offer ample warning against suing our brethren or neighbors; sufficient for any Christian, and particularly Adventist, to be persuaded. Yet hear the common reply: "But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?" (Luke 10:29)

The underlying thought here, of course, is that it is acceptable to treat our neighbor or brother in faith differently from one who does not qualify for that label. To argue about the definition of who qualifies to be loved is the essence of being "willing to justify

himself," for the Scripture instructs us to love our enemies. In James in particular, we read:

"Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet [water] and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so [can] no fountain both yield salt water and fresh." (James 3:10-12)

The Scripture does not describe the Christian faith as a reactionary one – that is, we do not change who we are or how we behave dependent on our surroundings or circumstances, with the notable exception of protesting evil. Rather, we are "steadfast," "unmoving," "built upon the Rock," "true as steel to principle," etc. James here says nothing of the actions of the one being blessed or cursed; it is not, "these things ought not so to be, unless they deserve it, or qualify as being okay to curse." It is the fountain, the tree, the mouth – in every particular, James speaks to the impossibility of cursing another, not because they are unworthy of cursing, but because it does not lie within us to do so at the source, any more than a fountain can have both salt and fresh water.

When self is dead, there is nothing left to bring forth cursing; it is only Christ within, and Christ only pours out blessing. If one persecutes, it is not a matter of who they persecute, or under what circumstances, or what challenges or duress, or what that person did or did not do to them. It is a matter of revealing themselves to be a persecutor – of being one that pours forth cursing with blessing, one that is capable of persecuting. When self is dead, it cannot rise under provocation to lash out, whether physically or spiritually. When self is dead, it does not look for reasons to avenge itself; it cannot do so. What we speak and do reveals and reflects what is within us, and no one else.

"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh." (Luke 6:45)

"But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth." (James 3:14)

If a brother or sister realizes there is bitterness, envying, or discord in their hearts or words, "glory not;" rather repent, be healed in heart, and receive the wisdom that is from above.

"For where envying and strife [is], there [is] confusion and every evil work." (James 3:16)

It is this "cause and effect" formula – that a tree cannot bear fruit of another type of tree – that balances James' writings on works and faith in the context of the gospel. The "cause" is a changed heart, and the "effect" is changed words and actions. The legalist has this backwards; and by "legalist," I truly mean every false religion, including nominal Christianity, paganism, etc. A false religion has any number of works or changed actions

as the "cause" – special prayers, fasting, going to church weekly, giving up possessions, making pilgrimages, performing rites, etc.

And why do any of this? The thing being sought – the "effect" – may be happiness, peace, salvation, redemption, forgiveness, improvement, etc. Ultimately, it is "do these things (cause) to become a better person (effect)." This formula will always fail, because the good deeds are made the means to an end, rather than the end themselves.

The gospel is the complete reverse; it is "effect and cause" from the perspective of works. We are freely given salvation, peace, forgiveness, etc.; we are made a new person. This "effect," the result sought by so many round-about and failing, intermittent actions, is actually the means by which those actions may be performed. Works is "cause and effect" – do the works, and achieve the blessing. The gospel is "cause and effect" – receive the blessing, and thus do the works.

One always fails, as it relies on the efforts of self. One always triumphs, as it relies on the efforts of Christ.

"There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God," (Hebrews 4:9, ASV) and it is this Sabbath rest – or lack thereof – that is revealed in either our love for or persecution of others.

As it is written, "From whence [come] wars and fightings among you? [come they] not hence, [even] of your lusts that war in your members?" (James 4:1)

We see, here, the "cause and effect" once more; where do wars and fighting (the effect) come from? The cause is "lusts that war in your members;" it is the lust of the flesh, and this alone, that is at the heart of the trademark persecution and all other "wars and fightings" among professed Adventists.

This is why righteousness by faith is intimately connected with the third angel's message; it is the prevention and cure for the condition it warns against.

"Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not." (James 4:2)

Striving, fighting, suing, jailing, killing... all such means fail to achieve their ends, and reveal a heart that is bound up in works – a false Sabbath. Just as works cannot bring forth a righteous character, force and strife cannot bring forth spiritual victory.

We know that the desire of Satan – "to be like the Most High" (Isaiah 14:14) – would be a good one, if it was truly a desire to be like Yahweh in character and truth, and not merely in authority and power. There are those who "kill, fight, war, and lust," "desiring to have" power and authority over the Adventist faith and movement, claiming to be the only true Seventh-day Adventists. Yet this they "cannot obtain;" they seek the name of Adventism, and the reputation of Adventists, but they refuse to actually be Adventists in heart. The

very means used to control Adventism prevents them from being Adventists. As a result, the more force that is used, the more true Adventists will rise up in protest and separate.

"Ye have not, because ye ask not." And why? "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume [it] upon your lusts." (James 4:3)

It is because the seeking is "amiss" – just as Lucifer, it is not the character of Christ as revealed in Adventism that is sought through the trademark. Rather it is the reputation, the glory, the influence of Adventism as perceived in the world.

Just as a fig tree cannot bear olives, an Adventist cannot bear the fruit of religious persecution, nor of partiality, nor of justifying self (making excuses), nor of willful sin in any particular. To those who do such things while professing holiness, the message of James comes:

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James 4:4)

It is spiritual adultery – fornication with the kings of the earth – that instigates the fall of modern Babylon, and the call to come out of her. It is friendship with the world – its maxims, philosophies, and spirit – that places one in the camp of the enemy of God, for all that is in the world is contrary to God, and originates from the great deceiver.

To those who hold the doctrine of the Sabbath as the only requisite for being a commandment-keeping people, regardless of their fellowship, the message of Mrs. White comes:

"All who claim to be Sabbath-keeping Adventists, and yet continue in sin, are liars in God's sight. Their sinful course is counterworking the work of God. They are leading others into sin." [19MR 177]

To be a Sabbath-keeping Adventist is to keep all commandments in the "law of liberty," from "Remember the Sabbath" to "Love thy neighbor as thyself" in all of its various manifestations. It is to say with Paul, whether another preaches the truth sincerely or through fraud (impersonation):

"Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." (Philippians 1:15-18)

Let us then heed the instruction as those who have seen the error before us, putting away everything of the color of strife and bitterness, of partiality and favoritism:

"Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door." (James 5:9)

The Judge stood before the door in the days of James; the Judge passed into the Most Holy in the days of Mrs. White. Today, the Judge is preparing to hand down His final verdict, and return for those who have been faithful unto the end.

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (James 5:7, 8)

Lucan: Are there any comments on the study tonight?

Adriel777: Amen

Zahakiel: C

Lucan: Go ahead

Zahakiel: I see a parallel in your point re: the trademark between a "name" and a "law." The Law of Yah has both a letter and a spirit... A name has both a sound (or spelling) and a meaning. The mainstream SDA Church has trademarked the "name" of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but by doing so they destroy its "name" as applied to themselves. As it is written, the letter kills, but the spirit makes alive. Just so, the Conference legally controls the name, the spelling and sound of it, but in so doing they lose the "name" of Seventh-day Adventism... its meaning, its spiritual value, and what it is in character. One cannot trademark, and thus control, a character; it can only be received, individually, from the true Creator of Adventism, Yah Himself. End.

Adriel777: Amen

Elyna1: Amen

Lucan: That is interesting... it reminds me of the way in which the letter of the Sabbath was "legally enforced" to the strictest sense in Yahshua's first advent, but, was devoid of the true Sabbath. At the second advent, it is the same condition, but the "name" rather than the "day." So, another association/parallel of the Sabbath and the name there.

Are there any further comments? If not, I'll ask Pastor to offer the closing prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in Heaven, thank You for writing Your Law of Love, the Royal Law, upon our hearts. As we contemplate the upcoming feast of refreshing, may our several insights be merged to glorify Your holy name. In Yahshua's holy name we pray, Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Barb: Amen

10-5-2018 The Third Angel in James

Elyna1: Amen.

Peter: Amen

Adriel777: Amen

Nattie: Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Naraiel: Amen