

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

Zahakiel: Dear Father in Heaven, We come before your divine presence during these sacred hours to rejoice in your light, and to rest from the cares of the week that has passed. We are thankful for the many blessings we have experienced, and look forward with eagerness to the days ahead. May your Spirit rest upon us this day, and may each receive sanctifying wisdom from the message you have prepared for us. Let your peace and joy attend us tonight and always, in Yahshua's name. Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Barb: Amen

Elyna1: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Adriel7777: Amen

Ruthline: Amen

Marie-kadeth: Amen

daphna: Amen

Lucan: Our study tonight is called "Water and Fire," and I would like to open with a quote that well describes the time in which we live:

"Already the judgments of God are abroad in the land, as seen in storms, in floods, in tempests, in earthquakes, in peril by land and by sea. The great I AM is speaking to those who make void His law. When God's wrath is poured out upon the earth, who will then be able to stand? Now is the time for God's people to show themselves true to principle. When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason. The nation will be on the side of the great rebel leader." [5T 136] (LMK)

Barb: F

Pastor Chick: F

Adriel7777: F

Elyna1: F

Gloria: F

Zahakiel: F

daphna: F

Lucan: "Our test," we may note, is "to stand in defense of truth and righteousness." At any time, and at any point? No; "when the majority forsake us," and "when champions are few." Few indeed are those who can deny that, in both judgments and spiritual insensibility, the above quote accurately describes the gospel field today. Yet while "the love of many shall wax cold," we are to burn all the more warmly. Where we find

cowardice and half-heartedness, we are to exemplify courage. In the midst of treason, betrayal, and hypocrisy we reveal the very loyalty of Yahweh, "who cannot lie." The greater the darkness of the world, the more black the night in which we operate, the more pure, holy, and bright the saints are to appear.

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:14-16)

In this generation we are as candles underwater; shedding light in an environment that otherwise would actively prevent, discourage, and make impossible the lighting thereof. To burn a candle underwater is impossible; it would require an active, sustained miracle of Yahweh to perform such a thing. It would be like solid iron floating on the waves.

"But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed. And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast [it] in thither; and the iron did swim. Therefore said he, Take [it] up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it." (2 Kings 6:5-7)

As it is written, "Behold, I [am] the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" (Jeremiah 32:27)

By revealing Christ's character in the midst of a world that has rejected His Spirit, we reveal that we are not of this world, and that it has nothing in us.

Adriel7777: Amen

We reveal that it is Christ Himself, and not society, influence, church, or culture that is the source of our light, for any lesser source would surely be overcome in the test soon to come upon the earth. Most importantly, we reveal that Christ's power and light are unquenchable; in the greatest opposition Satan can muster, we are to demonstrate that the weakest saint is as unmovable as Christ Himself was on the earth. It is written of Yahshua in the world:

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

It is written of us in the world:

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1 John 4:4)

John does not say "ye might overcome," or even "ye shall overcome." Rather, "ye have overcome," because our overcoming is through the One who is within us, and who has

overcome already. We partake of His overcoming, which is completed, perfect, and eternal; we rely on what is completed to accomplish that which will be, and is now being completed. So certain is His completing this overcoming in us that it is said, "ye have overcome;" we are therefore more than overcomers, "more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Romans 8:37)

As a flame burning underwater reveals itself to be entirely uninfluenced and untouched by the waves, we are to be entirely untouched and uninfluenced by the world while yet living in it. As it is written, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27)

To be unspotted by the world, it is necessary to be separate from the world in spirit and truth. We cannot take part in its fellowship, its pleasures, and its advice while expecting to remain unspotted, any more than we can bathe in ash and remain unspotted. This is not an idle comparison; Yahweh "calleth those things which be not as though they were." (Romans 4:17)

The destiny of the world and all that is in it is ash; as it is written:

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do [this], saith the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 4:1-3)

To partake of the "mind of Christ" is to view things as He views them, speak of them as He speaks of them, and testify as He testified.

What value are the spirit, advantages, and wisdom of the world, if we believe He who has promised it's soon reduction to ash?

We read accordingly: "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)

Now we have spoken of love for the world, and of being influenced by the world, yet these are often warnings understood in terms of being on friendly terms with the world. I should hope we are in need of a deeper message than this, as we are not "adulterers and adulteresses," making friends of the world knowingly. We want to look at something a little more subtle tonight, and that is the influence of the world through opposition.

The course of Satan is at first to attract, that he might persuade souls to willingly surrender life for the charms, cares, and goals of this life. When this fails, persecution is the next step, to shake off all who are not rooted, and thus may be shaken off. This is the goal of the spirits motivating many, though the individuals themselves are often ignorant of their own spirit.

Opposition in this sense may take the form of imprisonment and confiscated property; it may also take the forms of false witness to damage reputation, of rudeness and mistreatment, of injustice and hypocrisy. In short, it may be manifest in "coldness, cowardice, and treason" from a world and the deceived that seek to provoke a responding spirit within us.

Satan does not require that men be profoundly wicked; it is sufficient that they are not notably righteous. I say "notably" because this is the purpose of setting a candle on a stick, and a city on a hill; it is to be visible and recognizable, even from a distance. A righteousness that spreads no influence by example is as good as dead; a candle that does not dispel darkness has no flame.

"Salt [is] good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?" (Luke 14:34)

Our influence is the outworking of the salt or lack thereof we have within ourselves; our "conversation," as the Scripture calls it, is the means by which others are persuaded to be saved or lost. We may or may not be called to preach sermons of the most startling truths, and compose writings of the clearest logic; yet each has the Spirit given to them, and the Spirit reveals the unmistakable proof of peace, love, and kindness in the midst of fiercest trial and basest opposition. This, more than any other proof, demonstrates beyond question the value and result of our faith.

As it is written, we are to be "not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God." (Phil. 1:28, NKJV)

We are thus instructed, "Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not." (Romans 12:14)

To the one who curses, persecutes, or provokes Yah's servants, a response in turn serves to validate them in their course. "Evil for evil" is the mantra of the world; "they started it" is the excuse of sinners from the earliest of ages. Even from the very first moments of sin's introduction to our world, Adam blamed Eve, who blamed the serpent, who blamed Yahweh, each for their own individual choices. As we are not of the world, the world's provocations are to find no like reply in us. Our testimony in this is that of Yahshua; "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." (John 14:30)

If one is rude to us, we are to show Yahshua's forbearance in return. If one is slanderous, we are to show discretion. If one is argumentative, we are to show patience where

valuable, and "cast not our pearls before swine" when not. Where one sneers, we smile; where one imprisons, we advocate their liberty; where one flees duty, we stand unflinching.

"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men."
(Romans 12:17)

"Provide things honest" is translated variously as "have regard for good things;" "respect what is right," or "noble," or "honorable." And this we are to do before all; particularly those who provide us the evil which we refuse to return in kind. As with turning the other cheek to insult, this serves to bring conviction to both abusers and witnesses, and as a testimony to the watching universe. Yet the very next verse tells us further:

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." (Romans 12:18)

It follows, then, that despite offering good for evil and blessing for cursing, it still may not be possible to live peaceably with all men. Some - many, in this generation - do not have peace in themselves, nor desire it for others. As much as lieth in us, we live peaceably; as much as lieth in others is where the issue often arises.

What are we to do in such circumstances? The Scripture continues:

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but [rather] give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:19-21)

Here is forever dispelled the notion that "they made me do it" justifies any vengeful or oppressive action. Here is placed, in its true light, the spirit that says "we made our demands and they didn't obey, so we had no choice but to have them imprisoned, they brought it on themselves." From a government such words are to be expected. From a church such words are abomination, and the spirit of antichrist – for it is Christ that commands His servants, and judges between the wheat and the tares.

Even against those with whom we cannot peaceably live, we are told, not to be passive and submissive to wickedness, but to "avenge not yourselves." Even against those who are our enemies, we are to "overcome evil with good," for there is no evil in us to respond with in kind. Fight fire with fire and you will have fire; fight self with self and you will have self. When self is dead, all that remains is to overcome evil with good.

Adriel7777: Amen

Lucan: The one who allows themselves to do or speak wrongly in response to the actions of others has made the others their leader rather than Yahweh. This would allow another individual to take the helm of our life, to decide our actions, words, attitude, character, and fate by the way they treat us. By implication, the demon that inspires the opposition

would therefore influence, and eventually control our own actions and thoughts; whether directly or indirectly does not matter to them.

This, in effect, takes on the character of another rather than of Christ. The life of faith is defined by Yahshua; we cannot allow others to set the tone for our lives by replying with coldness for coldness, apathy for apathy, or impatience for impatience. To do so would be a denial of faith, for these things do not exist in the experience of Christ or His Spirit.

“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

We read in the Testimonies:

“You are to watch and pray, and remember that no matter how others may treat you, they cannot compel you to harbor a wrong thought or to perform a wrong action. We are not to consider our reputation so much as the honor of the cause of truth. Our reputation is in God’s hands. We are to manifest zeal for the cause of God.” [19MR 205]

This is not a passive work; the inclination of the flesh is to rise no higher than its environment and inputs. A people will attain no higher than the standard they aim for, often in those they regard as spiritual leaders. Our only safety, then, is to set our aim as high as Yahshua Himself.

A reactionary faith will not stand the test of opposition, betrayal, and coldness; ours is to be an active, advancing faith. If we are tempted to sink under discouragement, let us be cheerful – aggressively, actively cheerful if need be. Our power is from Yahweh, our success is from Yahweh, yet our will must be entirely engaged in the work of overcoming.

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with agape.” (1 Corinthians 16:13, 14)

And again:

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” (Galatians 5:1)

There is another danger in this vein, which is to focus on the evils in the world rather than on the righteousness of Yahshua. We have encountered many of this spirit recently, and it is increasingly common among some independent Adventists in particular. When we drive a car, we focus on the portion of the road we wish to travel on. If we wish to drive in the center of the lane, we must focus on the center of the lane. If we focus on the lines, we will drive on the lines; if we focus on the ditch, we will veer into the ditch.

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2 Cor. 3:18)

This principle is true of righteousness as well as of wickedness; "by beholding we become changed into the same image." Thus it is written, "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; [it] shall not cleave to me." (Psalms 101:3)

It is not sufficient to say, as some imply, "we are not as desperately wicked as the world's worst sinners." It is not sufficient to say, "we do not do as the Catholics and keep Sunday," or "we do not do as the denomination and imprison people." Protesting evil is necessary; protesting evil for hatred of evil is only valuable if that hatred is borne of love for righteousness. Many hate evil as an outworking of either a hatred for, or justification for, the evil in themselves.

Yet protest is the third angel's message, not the first or even the second in their order. It is righteousness that saves through faith; it is not a lack of sin that saves. The saints are never described as "unwicked;" it is the lost who are described as "unrighteous." We are not saved due to not having Satan formed within; we are saved due to having Christ formed within.

Our focus, therefore, is to be on Christ whom we have, and not on the sin we do not. We are to focus on our Pattern, and therefore be enabled to spot the counterfeits. A counterfeit is changeable; a false doctrine or worldview has a thousand other presentations, because it is false, and not consistent. We are to focus on the truth, and it is this – not familiarity with, reproof of, or rejoicing over error – that sets us free.

One of Satan's subtler deceptions is to attempt to convince us to be "not impatient" rather than to accept perfect patience; to "not be greedy" rather than to have generosity. This is the same error; to fixate our focus on the sin, the lack, the darkness, rather than the light that dispels it utterly and replaces it eternally. To focus on not being defeated is not the path of those who are "more than conquerors." Defeat is an impossibility; we do not focus on nor fear impossibilities, giving them any power of influence in our words or thoughts. All that remains is to focus on and apply ourselves to the victory we have already received.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things [are] honest, whatsoever things [are] just, whatsoever things [are] pure, whatsoever things [are] lovely, whatsoever things [are] of good report; if [there be] any virtue, and if [there be] any praise, think on these things." (Phil. 4:8)

I began this study speaking of fire and waves, and the miracle required to sustain a flame amidst water. While we know nothing is too hard for Yahweh, I would like to close with an account that has great significance to us, and to this imagery:

"And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD [that was] broken down. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid [him] on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour [it] on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said,

Do [it] the second time. And they did [it] the second time. And he said, Do [it] the third time. And they did [it] the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water." (1 Kings 18:30, 33-35)

Let us consider for a moment how this must have appeared to those not familiar with what would happen next. How possible is it that this sacrifice would be in any way lit on fire? How hot might a fledgling flame burn under such conditions, even if it should briefly flicker before being put out? Such is the prospect of righteousness in this generation; such is the possibility of the life of Christ being lived out in the midst of the greatest wickedness since the flood.

"Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that [was] in the trench." (1 Kings 18:38)

This is the example we are called to give as the last generation, the 144,000, and the EliYah people. We are not called to victory; we are called to overwhelming victory, Yah's perfect demonstration of victory through the smallest against the greatest. It does not matter the amount of opposition poured upon us; the greater the difficulties, the greater Yah's deliverance and glory through our overcoming.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1)

Shall the fire of Yahweh fall with any less power now than it did then? Shall He be any more hindered by the waters of opposition than the waters of Jordan, or the red sea?

Then let us burn more brightly in the greatest darkness; let us be consumed so thoroughly that even the water, stones, and wood surrounding us are evaporated in the warmth of Yah's revealed love. This is our reasonable service.

"So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him." (Isaiah 59:19)

Are there any comments on the study tonight?

Adriel7777: Amen

Ruthline: Amen

Adriel7777: C

Lucan: Go ahead

Adriel7777: I praise and thank Yah for this beautiful, powerful study. End.

Lucan: Are there any others?

Marie-kadeth: Great 😊

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

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in heaven. You are a consuming fire and all sin is destroyed in Your love. We thank you for being our victory in all of our life experience. In Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

Barb: Amen

Gloria: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Ruthline: Amen

Adriel7777: Amen

Naraiel: Amen

Elyna1: Amen.

daphna: Amen

Kim: Amen

Marie-kadeth: Amen 😊

Kim: Dominique read out loud for us tonight and she said she was thankful and blessed.

Adriel7777: Amen

Barb: 😊

Naraiel: 😊

Adriel7777: 😊