

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

**PastorChick:** Dear Father in Heaven. We come before Your presence with thanksgiving and we enter Your courts with praise. We ask for an outpouring of Your Holy Spirit as we gather to learn from you. In YAHSHUA's holy name, AMEN.

**Zahakiel:** Amen.

**Naraiel:** Amen.

**Gloria:** Amen.

**Lucan:** Amen

**Elyna:** Amen

**Barb, Daphna:** Amen, Amen

**Adriel:** Amen

**Peter:** Amen

**Zahakiel:** Happy Sabbath to everyone.

**Naraiel:** (Jaime and Maria don't have electric power).

**Zahakiel:** I pray the sacred hours are peaceful and joyful for all who call upon the name of Yah. Tonight, the study is called "A King over Thee." As you will recall, I have recently resumed work on the Answers from Heaven Bible study series. The study has been progressing nicely, although due to the fact that the "answers" consist of Bible verses and discussion questions about the topics at hand, it is a bit time consuming to produce, more so than the notes for these Friday night meetings.

This turns out to be a good thing; I find myself going over passages that I haven't read in a long time...and as we all well know, revisiting old material often yields new insights, new light. As I was looking up the verses for one particular question, I came across this passage from the Book of Deuteronomy:

"When thou art come unto the land which Yahweh thy Almighty giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, 'I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me,' thou shalt in any wise [surely/steadfastly] set him king over thee whom Yahweh thy Almighty shall choose. One from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee; thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother."  
(Deu 17:14, 15)

Now, keeping this prophecy in mind, because Yahweh is giving them an instruction for "when" they desire a king, we may consider a later passage. This is a relatively long one, so let me know when you have finished:

"And it came to pass, when [the prophet] Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abiah; they were judges in Beersheba. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment. "Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and came to Samuel unto Ramah, and said unto him, 'Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.' "But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, 'Give us a king to judge us.' And Samuel prayed unto Yahweh. "And Yahweh said unto Samuel, 'Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice; howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.'" (1Sam 8:1-9)

Let me know when you've read all this.

**Adriel:** F

**Naraiel:** F

**Barb, Daphna:** Barb: F

**PastorChick:** F

**Barb, Daphna:** Daphna: F

**victoria** joined the chat

**Elyna:** F

**Peter:** f

**Gloria:** F

**Zahakiel:** Samuel did just as Yahweh instructed. He warned the people that setting up a kingdom would lead to taxes – an additional 10% beyond the sacred tithe, a levy of the population for labor, giving up land to be the possession of the royal dynasty, and so on.

"Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, 'Nay, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.'" (1Sam 8:19, 20)

Now, there is quite a lot that we can learn about Yahweh from that verse in Deuteronomy and the related verses in 1 Samuel 8. Several things came to my mind when I read the words of Moses, and then remembered what I had read in Samuel. I would like to go over two of the primary ones tonight.

My first thought was to wonder, "Why was Samuel surprised?" First of all, Yahweh said that the people would one day desire a king, and He even gave them instructions for how to do it – to set someone over them from among the Israelites.

In fact, one of the contributing factors to the circumstances leading to the Messiah's death was the fact that Rome and Edom ruled Israel through Caesar and Herod respectively during His earthly ministry. Israel's poor spiritual state was directly related to their disobedience of the Creator's instructions, and their "kings" in that day were a clear consequence of their infidelity. Israel fell, ultimately, by declaring, "We have no King but Caesar," when they ought to have chosen Yahshua. In doing so, an act that we as CSDAs understand to be extremely significant, they not only rejected Yahweh as their King once again, but they even confirmed their rejection of His human representatives, and it was this instruction in Deuteronomy that they transgressed.

Samuel – as one raised in Yah's temple, (1Sam 1:24-28) and as a judge over Israel – was familiar with the writings of Moses. Furthermore, Samuel was a prophet in his own right, so why was he surprised that Yah's own words had come to pass? I will suggest that there are two reasons, and then a third.

1) The first reason for Samuel's surprise and distress at Israel's request for a king was that, even though he knew the prophecy, he also knew the initial and best purpose of Yah's will. The Almighty had said, in various places, "I will be their God." (e.g., Gen 17:8)

Now, it is interesting, at no point – at least, at no point before Samuel's day – did Yahweh the Father say that He would be the "King" over His people. There were times thereafter when those in vision called Yahweh the "King," such as, "Then said I, Woe is me, or I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, Yahweh of Hosts." (Isa 6:5)

It should be noted, however, that Yah's servants have called Him this after directly experiencing Him in vision, and their view is therefore universal, not national or earthly. The reason for this is because the Father is consistent to His own definitions and standards. A king must be chosen from among his own people. A king must be of the same "kind as those over whom he rules, and this is why the Son (who appeared in human flesh) is the "King of the Jews," and the "King of Kings."

To this role is the Son uniquely suited, and ONLY over those who have become "like Him" in character according to the promises we have received through the Gospel. (1 John 3:2) Even so, Yah, by saying that He is the "God" of Israel, takes on a role of ultimate governance. Had the people remained faithful to His law, they would have needed no human king. Yahweh has a best, first plan for His creation; nevertheless, as with the

entrance of sin, He has prepared a way to rescue mankind from its own bad choices if they will repent and return to Him in faith.

Samuel, in seeing Moses' prophecy of the earthly kingdom fulfilled, realized that this represented a reduction in faith, and even though Yah would guide them through it so that they would not suffer any more than was strictly dictated by cause-and-effect, it was still as Yah Himself said: a rejection of His direct leadership of the chosen nation.

2) The second reason Samuel was surprised was that, even though he knew the prophecy would inevitably be fulfilled, it was not yet – in his estimation – time for Israel to establish a kingdom.

Yahweh began His prophecy by saying, "When thou art come unto the land which Yahweh thy Almighty giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein..." then the kingdom would be established. It is true that Israel was dwelling in the land that Yah had given them, but they only very barely "possessed" it.

We must keep in mind the time during which these things were unfolding. Reading through the Book of Judges to establish the timeframe, we begin every few chapters with the formula, "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and Yahweh delivered them into the hand of [some king] for [some number of] years." (e.g., Judges 6:1, Judges 13:1)

Israel's possession of the land was hardly guaranteed; the people were only holding on to it by virtue of the heroes of faith that Yahweh raised up to defend them following repeated transgression. This was hardly the environment in which a holy kingdom should be established, and yet this is exactly why Israel wanted a king at that time. Their reasoning was that their king would, "go out before us, and fight our battles."

Because of their fear of defeat, Israel had two options. One, they could become faithful, and because of their faith, Yah would defend them from all enemies, so that they would never again be captives or adversaries of a stronger nation. Two, they could remain rebellious and prone to backsliding, but develop a strong military force under a human king, so that they could defend themselves from the pagan nations that surrounded them.

Samuel knew that hope for the first option was the reason why Yah bore so long with His people, raising up judges not merely to deliver them from physical slavery, but also from spiritual bondage. And yet, the people were adamant that the second path was their choice, and thus began their long slide into apostasy, ultimately leading to their rejection, many years later, of the true King when He arrived.

3) The third factor distressing Samuel is somewhat similar to the first. It was the motive of the people to ask for a king. Yes, as I have said earlier, the people wanted a champion to defend them from their enemies. Not trusting Yah to do it Himself, or even though a temporary judge, they wanted a perpetual succession of rulers that they could "see" in power, to fight their battles and keep them from captivity. But that is only a part of their motive.

A champion of Israel could have been chosen without giving him royal authority to make laws and draw taxes. The people specifically asked for a king, and not only a king, but, "that we also may be like all the nations." This third motive leads to my second major thought for tonight, and that involves the "leaven of Herod."

I mentioned Herod before, a foreign king over the Israelite people during the ministry of Yahshua. We read this verse, a warning of Christ to His disciples, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod." (Mark 8:15)

We have heard much of the leaven of the Pharisees. It is spiritual pride, hypocrisy, an outward appearance of holiness while defects of character are cherished and even praised.

But have you heard much about the leaven of Herod? Clearly, Yahshua thought it was important enough to speak of it to His followers, and Peter and Mark thought it important enough to record for the ages. But I have never heard or read a study about what the leaven of Herod actually is.

Simply and briefly told, the leaven of Herod is a desire to be like the world. The leaven of the Pharisees is a "religious" temptation. One may act holy, spiritual, and yet be corrupted inwardly. The leaven of Herod is the secular equivalent. Herod was not, at all, a spiritual ruler. He appointed a high priest over Israel, and then later had him killed because he was more popular among the Jews than himself.

In various ways, Herod was cruel to his Israelite subjects; in all existing accounts he was a paranoid, mentally unstable murderer... but he was accepted by the Jews, because he kept them in Rome's good graces. He kept them "safe" from the military and political might of the nation's enemies, and for this they approved him – a poor reason for setting up a ruler, since the only safety is in Yah Himself. Furthermore, he built them a large, spectacular temple, which was very impressive.

Because of these things, because he satisfied their carnal needs (exactly as Samuel warned them about centuries before) he was acknowledged as the King of the Jews. But what of this large, spectacular temple? Yahshua did not praise Herod for building it. He

called Herod a "fox," (Luke 13:32) sly and untrustworthy, and of the building itself we read this:

"And Yahshua went out, and departed from the temple; and His disciples came to Him for to shew Him the buildings of the temple. And Yahshua said unto them, 'See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.'" (Mat 24:1, 2)

The Son of Yah was not impressed by the structures of the temple, knowing quite well that these were only physical aspects, built by human ambition and designed to dazzle the senses; but Israel was further away from the heart of Yah than ever before...a fact that led the Savior to weep over the grand structure, rather than marvel.

Yes, Israel was to have a temple, but consider the way that the first tabernacle was constructed in Exodus. It was made of materials given by goodwill, free gifts from the chosen people – not built to satisfy the ambitions of a greedy king.

Now, this second temple was a beautiful building, and Yah's presence was there until the crucifixion (Luke 1:5-11, Mark 15:38). Yah honored it, because it was built according to His will for a temple to be in Israel. Yahshua called it His Father's House; (Mat 21:13) nevertheless, it was the ritual, the spiritual significance of it that was important, not the fact that it was big and expensive.

The Son rightly chastised His disciples (subtly) for marveling at the outward symbol of Israel's connection to the Creator while the state of the Chosen Nation's faith was a lamentable ruin.

The leaven of Herod is to be distracted by the world from the spiritual realities. Do not be falsely religious, like the Pharisees, but neither should you fix your eyes on the earth, like Herod and those who praised Him, or like the Israelites of ages past, who accepted a secular king because of their simultaneous fear and envy of the heathen.

"Therefore take no thought, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What shall we drink?' or, 'Wherewithal shall we be clothed?' (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. "But seek ye first the kingdom of Elohim, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Mat 6:31-33)

Those who follow these words, which are life, and spirit, and truth, neither need nor desire to have a human king over them. Yes, there are governments, and kingdoms that Yah has

raised up, but only for a time, that He may move them and take them down again as He preserves His people in a world shrouded in the Enemy's darkness. The mightiest of rulers exists only at Yah's desire, and only for the best good of His few, scattered, almost unknown people.

Let us watch and pray, let us be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Let us desire the best will of Yah for His people, His first and best remaining plan for our lives, beware the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.

We have much to learn from the mis-steps of Israel, as it is written, and we see, in many places, voices such as Samuel the Prophet's, raised in protest of unrighteousness, to draw our attention to where the most significant lessons of the Bible may be found.

Are there any questions or comments about the study tonight?

**Adriel:** C

**Zahakiel:** Go ahead.

**Adriel:** I had never heard a study on the "leaven of Herod" before either. I praise Yah for this one. End

**Naraiel:** (I am finishing reading)

**Lucan:** C

**Zahakiel:** Go ahead.

**Naraiel:** C.

**Lucan:** I see a connection between the Israelites desiring a king from among their own to go out and fight their battles, and the attitude among Christians that tends towards electing cult leaders. The desire to have a strong leader to guide and judge the church. The desire to have a "more qualified minister" to "go out and fight our battles". The desire to have some other individual take over the responsibilities that each of us, as kings and priests, are called to bear. I think the value in the records of the Israelites is rarely in wondering how they could have erred, but in learning how we might avoid similar error. While we have very little danger of electing a king, I appreciate the insight from this study about the spiritual alternative. <End.>

**Zahakiel:** Thank you for sharing that, yes. While the world certainly has fewer "kings" than it once did the principle applies quite generally...

**PastorChick:** C

**Zahakiel:** and there is always danger in acting from fear (as we touched on briefly at the last New Moon meeting) which may apply to personal interactions, to Churches, to politics, etc. Go ahead, Pastor.

**Adriel:** (Giselle had a c)

**PastorChick:** I was expecting some tie in to the GC's behavior in behalf of and at the behest of the SDA Church and all of it IS, in fact, prompted by fear. It seems to me that most, if not all, of our church-related tests are getting at the cleansing of fear from the camp. END.

**Zahakiel:** There is quite clearly a parallel with the GCs activities in choosing kings and champions from the arm of flesh, when if they had been faithful, no enemy would have ever been permitted to have any power over them whatsoever. Oh, right... go ahead, Giselle.

**Gloria:** C

**Naraiel:** What happens before fear or unbelief? I think unbelief happens before fear.

**PastorChick:** A

**Naraiel:** ... When churches go to the state for receiving some kind of State approval as non-profit corporations, to avoid paying taxes, and give them advantages over others, to be able to preach the gospel better, according to them it's because they don't believe in Yah's power, and then they fear to be abandoned, or something. End.

**Zahakiel:** Go ahead, Pastor.

**Barb, Daphna:** (Gloria has a comment before Pastor)

**Zahakiel:** (He had an A to Giselle's statement)

**PastorChick:** I was thinking about the two types of "leaven" spoken of by YAHSHUA. "Leaven of the Pharisees" which is the spiritual pride that develops when one becomes exalted in position, doctrine, etc. professing to be "the true church" or "God's Chosen" which seems to ultimately lead to the "leaven of Herod" or the desire to become like or fit into the worldly mold. From the beginning of the falling away a gradual process, totally imperceptible to the human mind sucks an individual and individuals into the "dark hole" of Satan's deceptions. Self-protection, self-exaltation, etc. all go hand-in-hand until no matter

how high the profession the soul is steeped in the "mind set on the flesh" which is enmity against YAH. END.

**Naraiel:** C.

**Zahakiel:** Go ahead, Gloria.

**Gloria:** Amen to this wonderful study. 😊 I see a parallel between two things. We should not be happy with someone because they do something good for us just like the Jews were. They were happy with Herod because he made them a temple that was glorious. We should be happy even though we do not get big things or things that we like from someone. We should be happy with them because of who they are. End

**Zahakiel:** Go ahead, Giselle.

**Naraiel:** I have been thinking about something similar this week. But another thing I was thinking about seems to fall in the middle ground of those. Even though Herod was not building the temple for spiritual reasons, but political reasons the construction of that big project of religious nature became a time consuming distraction from coming in contact with the King of Kings.

What about any Christian who distracts themselves with religious projects to feel important, somehow, but those very projects and ideas could become a distraction from sanctification and start losing 100% connection with the King of Kings? End

**PastorChick:** Q (for Giselle)

**Naraiel:** (that could also become a snare from Satan).

**Zahakiel:** Any others with thoughts to share? Go ahead, Pastor.

**PastorChick:** Can you, Sis. Giselle, give an example or two of such a scenario? END.

**Naraiel:** Well, Victoria was sharing with me some experiences she had with people who were in charge of some kind of church or ministry. Her own husband, who was a Pastor at that time, was always creating ideas or projects to help other people, and little by little he began to ignore his family, and become more abusive. His own role in the church became like his god or main focus, to the point of becoming a distraction or obstacle in his relationship with Christ. End

**PastorChick:** C

**Zahakiel:** Go ahead.

**PastorChick:** OK, so that seems to be a matter of imbalance...

**Naraiel:** (right)

**PastorChick:** which can happen with jobs, ministries, etc. when a person perceives their obligations to be more important than relationships which are ordained of YAH to hold priority. END.

**Zahakiel:** If there is nothing further, then I will ask Bro. Luke to close our meeting with a prayer.

Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for the perfect example of your Son, as well as the imperfect examples of those who have come before us, that we might both know the road and perceive the ditches to avoid. We thank you for cleansing your children from all fear in the very act of granting us your love. We ask that your Spirit continue with us through the Sabbath hours and into our continued rest beyond. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

**Adriel:** Amen

**PastorChick:** Amen.

**Elyna:** Amen

**Zahakiel:** Amen.

**Peter:** Amen

**Barb, Daphna:** Amen. Amen

**Naraiel:** Amen