

7-15-2016 Occupy

Barb: PC: Dear Father in Heaven. We are thankful for Your care during the week and now we come before You for a spiritual feast. Pour Your Spirit upon us as we worship in Spirit and in Truth as we pray in the holy and precious name of YAHSHUA. Amen.

Barb: Barb: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Adriel777: Amen

daphna: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Elyna: Amen.

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath to everyone. Tonight's study has a simple title: "Occupy." It is based upon this parable (lengthy, so let me know when you've read it all):

"And as they heard these things, [Yahshua] added and spake a parable, because He was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore, 'A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, "Occupy till I come.'" "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us.'" "And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. "Then came the first, saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.'" "And he said unto him, "Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.'" "And the second came, saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.'" "And he said likewise to him, "Be thou also over five cities.'" "And another came, saying, "Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin; for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man. Thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.'" "And he saith unto him, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow. Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?" "And he said unto them that stood by, "Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds." (And they said unto him, "Lord, he hath ten pounds.")" "For I say unto you that unto every one which hath shall be given, and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.'" (Luke 19:11-27)

Barb: Finished

Barb: PC: Finished

Lucan: Done

Peter_Jr_18: Done.

Adriel777: F

daphna: finished

Zahakiel: There are two lessons that these words clearly convey. The citizens' hatred of the coming ruler is, perhaps, topic for another study on another day. For tonight, I would like to examine those aspects of the parable that lie parallel to the more commonly quoted parable of the "talents" found in Matthew 25. The meaning of the parable was not for the Apostles on that very day, but applied instead to afterwards, when He had departed for Heaven, leaving them a promise that He would

someday return. In departing, He has given to each of His servants a unique collection of talents and gifts, as it is written, "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He saith, 'When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.'" (Eph. 4:7, 8)

The verse from Ephesians 4 that we have used most often in our studies is probably the twelfth, which speaks about the purpose of those gifts, namely, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ." We speak, often, of the gifts, and the effects of those gifts – the ministry to which we are called, the sanctification of the life that our Father has given us, the knowledge, desire, and willpower to perfect the character by His longsuffering and grace, as we discussed last week. Let us ensure that we utilize them in the Spirit of the One who has given those gifts to us, for He has said to us, "Occupy till I come."

On what shall we spend our time? Clearly, if we are Christ's, and if we bear His gifts, we ought to spend our time "doing well." After all, we do have His gifts and talents. It is written that He has given these things to us, therefore (and I do love to mention this as often as I can) our testimony ought to be that of an invincible, faith-filled experience. If we tarnish our testimony by saying, "I cannot" do some righteous thing, or "I try," or "I am not good enough to do what God asks of me," or "We cannot perfectly please the Father," or any of the various other things that Satan has tricked the multitudes into accepting, we call our Father a liar.

If Yahweh has said, "I have given you gifts suitable to your purpose, so that not only will you be perfected before Me, but you will also help to perfect others," but our words and actions do not reflect this, then we do our Father great wrong. We do, in fact, the very opposite of fulfilling our purpose; we were called, and chosen, and sent, to vindicate our Father's Law and character before the watching universe. Should we say, "I am not what He has called me to be," then we are saying that He called the wrong person, or He did not really give us those gifts that He has claimed to have supplied, or that the gifts He gave us are insufficient to overcome the tendencies of our now-dead flesh. What we know of Yahweh makes the acceptance of any of these impossible; yet, how many who claim to be Christians do believe one of the above absurdities, perhaps not even realizing that they are doing so? Let all who identify themselves as Yahshua's put away the excuses coming forth from the flesh, and from the fallen spirits, and exercise the gifts that await our employment. This, after all, is the point of these parables. Occupy, spend your time wisely, literally "carry on business," until I return, says the Messiah.

With what, and on what, shall we use the talents we have been given? In our time as members of the Bride, in reaching out to others on the Internet and in our various spheres of influence, we have come across others with whom we have some things in common. They claim to be Bible-believing Christians, they claim to be called by Yahweh for some special purpose, and they seem very dedicated to the work they are doing. They teach what they understand to be the Gospel and yet, here is the difference...they will often have some agenda that appears to be equally (if not more) important to them than the Gospel. This is particularly the case with independent ministries, and I spoke a little about them last week...but we find it in individual (often solitary) believers as well. Some will get involved with anti-abortion activities, political positions, denouncing homosexual agendas, anti-war protests, anti-Trinitarianism, even very "Adventist" issues like health and diet, but taken to an extreme. Those of you here could probably list some other, similar issues espoused by those with whom we have spoken over the years. And, to be clear, these groups and individuals are quite often on the Biblical side of these controversies. Christians certainly ought to make the Bible's view on these very important matters known whenever we can; however, they

7-15-2016 Occupy

must never rise to the same level – in fact, we must never even make it appear that they are at the same level – as the Gospel message.

Some years ago a couple of us encountered an individual, an Adventist, who was convinced that God had called him to “sound the alarm” with regard to the increasing ease with which someone could get an abortion in the United States. He had websites, email lists, possibly even occasional speaking engagements, in which he would express the Creator’s view of the taking of unborn lives. Now, as I have said, the individuals I’m thinking about, including this one, are often correct in their basic views. In this matter, the Bible is clear that the Father knows, and loves, each one of us “from the womb,” (Isa 49:1, Psalm 71:6, Psalm 22:10, Job 31:15, etc.) and in fact it is at that time that many of our unique gifts are received. (Judges 16:17, Jer. 1:5) Conception results in a human being, despite the arrogant, confused, and oft-repeated claims of the world to the contrary. At no point does a non-human “become” a human; this does not happen in gestation any more than it does in our “developmental” history. Each life is the result of special, miraculous creation, even if the circumstances are not what we limited humans might consider to be ideal.

Adriel777: Amen

Zahakiel: I state all this to indicate that the importance of standing up for human lives is evident. What this individual was saying about hospitals, including SDA hospitals, and the state of things in general, was quite correct, and we ought not to say or do anything contrary to that burden... and yet if you were to ask me what He was teaching about the Gospel, and life everlasting, I cannot recall a single thing.

Another...Politics is, these days in particular, a fascinating subject of study. In our lifetimes, like never before, an engaging drama is unfolding in the United States and other countries, and it can become tempting to get caught up to the point of distraction. As Adventists, we know our duty to vote for policy rather than party or individual... assuming that there are any policies worth our attention on the table, and we can certainly use it, as we can use many things, as a starting-point to speak about the Bible’s position on a variety of matters.

For example, I’ve used a lot of what I have seen in the news lately to speak with several people about the importance of “character” in those who hold leadership positions. However, it is worth asking as before, with what are we going to be occupying our time? How are our words going to be remembered? How would we be remembered for our words if we were to leave the world this very moment? Where have the majority of our “pounds” and “talents” been expended?

At times, I have attempted to engage such Christians as these, who are caught up in these issues, by asking, “What about overcoming sin? What about preparing for Heaven? What about sanctifying the Church with our time and talents?” The response I usually get is something like, “People are dying, the country/government/whatever is falling apart. Why should (or how can) they be focused on the Gospel as long as these terrible conditions persist?” I propose, on the authority of Christ Himself, that this thinking is entirely backward. We read, for example, “And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, ‘Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.’” “And Yahshua said unto him, ‘Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.’” And he said unto another, ‘Follow me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.’ Yahshua said unto him, ‘Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.’” “And another also said, ‘Lord, I will follow thee, but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.’” “And

7-15-2016 Occupy

Yahshua said unto him, 'No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'" (Luke 9:57-62)

Now, none of these statements indicate that Yahshua was unconcerned about even the least details of human life. He cares very much for the safety and shelter of His followers, for observing righteousness with regard to loved ones (both living and dead), and the principle of hospitality, most sacred in that place and time, and that which He himself invented. We can support His concern for these principles with many verses; and yet, when He instructs those who hear Him to preach the Gospel, all of these matters become secondary.

To put things on an individual level, focusing one's God-given talents on anything other than the Gospel would be like someone saying, "I want to be converted, but first let me quit smoking," or "first let me learn to control my bad language." They put the "cart before the horse," for how shall they ever do these things without the power of Christ of which they are delaying their acceptance?

Yes, people do die; they are killed by other human beings both before and after birth, and it is terrible. The governments of the world are descending into chaos, to the degree that it is impossible but to conclude that these must be the very end of days...but Yahshua says, very applicably, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." (Mat 24:6) The passage here continues until we find this verse, "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (verse. 14)

As loud and bright and destructive as the world's current events become, we know our role in all this. The solution to all that troubles mankind is Yahshua. We know this, and the world does not – in fact, it mocks the very idea. The message of the Gospel is the only thing that can save men's souls. And again, these are some "hard" truths. What good does it do to bring more people into the world if there is no Gospel to greet them here? A few years of life is without eternal value, if it does not become an everlasting life...the Gospel is very much an "all or nothing" message, for the Master has said, "The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had never been born." (Mark 14:21)

There are worse things than never being born. Being born only to dwell in the flesh, and know sorrow here on earth, and then only know destruction in the judgment...these are complicated subjects, and associated (perhaps justifiably) with very strong feelings. It is easy to be accused (as Yahshua and God have) of caring more about matters of the Law than the individual lives of those who are expected to obey it. But our thinking is not after the flesh, but the spirit. We will see that if we teach the Gospel, and if people accept it, then there would be no need for many of these kinds of activities, protests against government corruption, or any other evil. To understand the everlasting significance, the "long-term" impact, as it were, is not to be insensitive or indifferent to the short-term effects. But the nature of love is that it first seeks one's lasting good. As Yahshua said, when the Gospel is taught as a witness, "then shall the end come." Then shall sorrow end – forever. Then shall suffering and death, end – forever.

Adriel777: Amen

Zahakiel: Then shall sin be cast out into the darkness, dragging death and hell with it, and every tear shall be wiped away. Then shall every child who lives to see these things, born and unborn, be saved. Then shall the Government of Christ preside, being perfect and incorruptible.

Too often those who receive gifts from On High swat at leaves, when it is the root of the world that is evil. We are content, too often, to bail water out of the ship with a spoon, rather than plugging the hole by which the water is entering the vessel. The Christian's work is to promote the Gospel of Yahshua, and the authority of the Word of Yahweh in every aspect of human life. It is, in some ways, "easier" to narrow this task and focus on one or more individual evils; and yet, for every leaf you pull off of a tree, more leaves grow back. Any solution thus obtained would be temporary at best, and we will not have used our talents for their intended purposes.

Now, some have asked us, "But don't you CSDAs do the same thing, by focusing on some 'Church name,' and some legal disputes over trademark law? How is this any better than being vocally against corruption, violence, crime, and so on?"

On a doctrinal level, the Bible tells us that the Mark of the Beast is an integral part of the "Everlasting Gospel" in Revelation 14, and that being able to identify it as the work of Satan through human laws and policies requires spiritual discernment. It also leads to unity with the Bride of Christ, and sanctification toward everlasting life. The Scriptures direct the work of the Christian. Two matters may seem equal to men, but their effect may be as different as life and death.

On a more intuitive level, understanding what it is that Yahweh wants for His people in this generation, including what He desires His people call themselves while they bear about His Gospel of victory and salvation, is necessary for a ministry to be successful in this age, caught up as it is in images and confusion. Just as a century ago, it was necessary for Yahweh's people to call themselves "Seventh-day" Adventists...in order to draw attention to the issue of salvation for the age. In just the same way, today it is necessary, but for a different reason. We are "Creation Seventh Day Adventists" because this name bears the essential features of our beliefs in front, and if borne confidently, it will strengthen our testimony of victory over sin, and righteousness by faith. There may be much more to consider about this matter, but I believe I have said enough for the principles to be conveyed.

To summarize, then, I would say this: We have a limited amount of time here on earth; one way or another, by death or (praise Yah) by translation, we are not here for long...therefore, we must prioritize what kind of a Kingdom we want to build. Will we focus on those things that are temporary, or uncertain, only to have them destroyed for a lack of knowledge of the Lord? Shall we try to build a perfect human society based on secularism? If such a thing were even possible, it would fade with time just like every other human endeavor completed apart from the Creator.

What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, we may ask, only to betray it by failing to care for its soul? How shall we occupy, how shall we spend our time, until Yahshua's glorious return? Let us, as ambassadors of the Kingdom to Come, be faithful to our charge, as easy as the world makes it to fall into popular or common crusades, and let us speak the truth in love, preparing those who hear us to stand in the judgment, and to rise in the resurrection or be transformed at the return of the dear Son of Yahweh.

Are there any comments or questions about the study tonight?

7-15-2016 Occupy

Adriel777: C

Zahakiel: All right, if there are none, then I will ask Bro. Luke to close the meeting with a prayer.

Zahakiel: Go ahead.

Adriel777: As always I praise Yah for this message. I was reading a few pages in "Our High Calling" today that were along the same lines... I am taking this message to heart. End

Zahakiel: Maybe you could post some of the statements you read on Facebook later on 😊

Adriel777: Okay 😊

Zahakiel: All right, go ahead when ready, Bro. Luke.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We know that there are many things that are sin in the world, yet all spring from the condition of sin. We know that there are many things that are righteous, yet all spring from the condition of righteousness. May your people ever keep before them the cause as well as the effect, that true healing may occur. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

Barb: Amen; PC: Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

daphna: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Peter: Amen

Barb: Have any of you read or heard of the new religious law in Russia?

<http://penews.org/news/religious-freedom-revoked-in-russia>

Adriel777: no

Elyna: No

Lucan: No

Barb: It is now illegal to evangelize in Russia except within respective church houses. I think the first offense is a robust fine. The Adventists filed an appeal, but failed to convince the authorities. The government has apparently categorized Adventists along with other "extremists." I find this law to be significant. It is not likely to be reversed and can be the first sign of the closing of human probation.

Adriel777: Was that the article you posted on FB? I haven't had a chance to read it yet.

Barb: I think I did share it.

Adriel777: okay

Barb: It was first shared on ReligiousLiberty.tv FB.

7-15-2016 Occupy

Adriel777: okay

Barb: I received an email about the Adventist Church appeal. If the Gospel has to go to ALL nations before the end comes it would appear that the Gospel is now closed out from Russia. I perceive a difference in having the Gospel locked out of a country where it has never been welcomed...

daphna: who sent you the email about the Adventist Church appeal.

Barb: and locked out of a country where it was welcomed and then locked out.

Barb: I receive regular Adventist News Network emails, along with emails from Adventist Today.

Barb: It is rather apparent that the Spirit of YAH is being withdrawn from the earth.

daphna: ok, thanks

Barb: If any are not very sure of their status with YAH, there is no time to delay. "Extremism" and "radicalism" are two words that will be applied to any who follow a narrow way. Every nation will be clamping down on religious groups which are classified "extreme" or "radical." We cannot escape those labels while living the Truth.

Adriel777: Thank-you for sharing that news with us.

Barb: Welcome.

Adriel777: Yes, it seems there's an escalation of mass shootings and bombings...another evidence of Yah's Spirit being withdrawn.

7-15-2016 Occupy