

PastorChick: Dear Father in Heaven. We are thankful for another week of life with You, living the abundant Way and we thank You for this Sabbath blessing that was prepared for us from the foundation of the world. We expect a bountiful measure of Your Spirit as we convene and commune before Your Throne. In YAHSHUA's holy and precious name, AMEN.

Elyna: Amen.

Barb, Daphna: Amen Daphna: Amen

Peter_JR_1718: Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Peter: Amen

Naraiel: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath to everyone. Tonight's study is called "The Protection of Angels."

Last week, we discussed "Satan's Greatest Victory." We saw that doubt – disbelief in the promises of Yahweh – was the Tempter's first real triumph on the earth, and on its foundation he built the principles and systems of this world. Those who fall prey to doubt quickly take on the mind of Satan, and though they may not all outwardly act in an "evil" manner as a result of this, they take the Mark of The Beast in a very general – but very real – way, because they act out of the Serpent's principles.

This actually has a very direct application to today's current spiritual crisis. We find ourselves in a dispute over the name that Yah has given to His people. The world, and the worldly organization that the mainstream SDA Church has become, will say, "We own that name. You cannot use it." The Christian who understands that Yahshua is the Head of the Church, and the only one authorized to bring its doctrines and practiced into judgment, are forced into a choice. They must either submit to the Beast and change or surrender the name, or they must resist the Mark, and submit to civil penalties. The decision one makes in the face of this choice directly connects to whether or not Satan's greatest victory has claimed us.

If we were to doubt that Yahweh has prophesied these very days, and has all things well in hand, then we could not stand against temptation, and we would fall away. If, however, we have rejected Satan's claims on us, and denied him his victory, then we will know and live by every word that proceeds out of the Father's mouth, and we will have no fear of what man (in his pride and self-importance) may think to do with the Redeemed. But in what way does Yahweh deliver us from the plans and movements of the Enemy?

As I said last week, Satan is cunning, powerful, and experienced when compared to his human victims. No matter what we may think of ourselves, demons have seen human history from the beginning, and they know how we "tick," as they say. The only thing that surprises the devils is when a human being acts unlike a human being. In other words, when we partake of Yahshua's divine nature, and do things that the fallen spirits cannot anticipate, we escape their best laid plans. Our own plans succeed, because they are laid with divine wisdom...and yet, we still cannot underestimate our enemies in "high places." Even the perfect plans, even the wisest of designs, can still be overthrown by Satan and his followers, because they have been given much authority to trouble mankind. The universe must see what a kingdom ruled by the principles of sin looks like; therefore, the Earth has become the central focus of creation. The followers of Yahshua will be

delivered in the end, but only through much trial and disappointment, because of the darkness of the world through which we are passing.

But then again, we are not alone.

So, there is a conflict back and forth between Yahshua and Satan, a "Great Controversy," as Adventists call it. Yah set the creation in place, and Satan corrupted it. Mankind fell under Lucifer's rebellion, but Yahshua has redeemed us by His life, ministry, death and resurrection.

Now, we operate under Christ's principles, but the demons are given the authority to oppose us, and because of this, sometimes even divinely inspired plans may fall short of what we might expect them to accomplish. But then, in a final turn of the controversy, Yahweh sends His angels to ensure that all that is vital about His plans for us come to pass. There is a back-and-forth going on, but He who is infinite in wisdom has known the end from the beginning, and the "Good News," the Gospel message, is that He is on our side, and acts on our behalf even at infinite cost. The ministry of angels is the way that Yahweh fulfills His promises to mankind. His divine servants are the guarantee, because they act according to the Holy Spirit, of all that is written in Scripture.

Recently, I saw a segment of a debate between a creationist and an evolutionist, both scientists, about Noah's Ark. Objectively evaluating the discussion, I would have to admit that both make "good" points, although as always the evolutionist's points depend upon assumptions – primarily that there is no God who is actively involved in the events that unfold in human history... and that animal life as we see it today is unchanged from five thousand years ago. In this segment, however, the skeptic was approaching the historicity of the record from another perspective than biology. He was saying that in human history, many kinds of wooden boats have been made, of various sizes and shapes. After a certain size, however, it becomes impossible to keep them afloat. Because of the way the water moves and shifts, and because of the way the wind blows, the wooden parts from which the boat are made will inevitably twist and bend, leading to leaks, and ultimately sinking.

The response of the creationist was to rightly point out that the boats to which the skeptic was referring were all intended for transportation, movement from one point to another, and this generally involved the use of sails. With the addition of sails, the effect of the wind on the boat is much greater, contributing to the twisting effect. The Ark was not designed to "go" anywhere, merely to not fall apart for several months, and – being based on an inspired plan – this is exactly what it did. Of course, the skeptic would not be convinced by this line of reasoning; and the truth is, as Adventists we would not entirely be either.

Some time ago, I read in the writings of Ellen White that even though the Ark was based on Yahweh's own plan, and even though it was designed solely to float and remain intact, the force and fury of the flood waters would have been far too great for the structure to resist. In addition to the perfect construction designed by Yahweh and brought forth from the obedient hand of Noah, the Almighty also sent angels to steady the boat, to keep it floating, and in one piece.

Of course, anyone claiming to be a scientist that relied on this explanation would not be taken seriously. Many nominal Christians, while happy to hear something that supported their position, would not be likely to accept the testimony of a modern-day prophet. The child-like faith of the Bible believing Christian is a thing to be held in contempt by the world. The Scriptural instruction to hear the word of prophecy in order to prosper is ignored. And though we, as intelligent people, are comforted when we know there is "evidence" (if not proof) for the things we accept as true, we also acknowledge that there are some things the Bible records that cannot be subject to testing. In other words, there are some things we must simply decide to believe, a statement true of any system of religion or non-religion. At some point, we must make a choice.

Some have said, "How can God punish a person simply because they don't believe?" If belief was something forced on us, so that we were simply victims of our upbringing and tradition, then that would be a legitimate argument against the idea of a perfect divine judgment. However, we are not victims of our beliefs. We are responsible for what we hold to be true.

Many, who have determined to avoid persecution for righteousness, fell away from the faith. It isn't that they didn't think the doctrines were valid any longer, at least not at first... it's that they chose, they decided, that their own, that temporary happiness was more important than a life of faith. The faith then followed the decision, as it often does, and soon they genuinely disbelieved what they once held so dear.

By contrast, many who saw the persecution of others decided to unite with these various Christian communities, deciding that they would rather suffer in this world and be blessed by Yahweh, than to live in safety for a while, and fall short of the calling that the Holy Spirit inspired within them. Some details of some religions, including the true one, may be "hard to accept" without careful consideration and thought, but ultimately belief – like love – comes down to a choice, to a selection of priorities.

As a Christian, and as an Adventist, I choose to believe the promises in the Word, which tell us clearly, for example,

"The angel of Yahweh encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." (Psa. 34:7)

We read also, "And, behold, the angel of Yahweh came upon him, and a light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, 'Arise up quickly.' And his chains fell off from his hands." (Acts 12:7)

"There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." (Psa. 91:10, 11)

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14)

The parallels with what I was discussing last week, and what I have reviewed tonight, should be clear. We are very much like the Ark, not only collectively as a Church, but also individually as the "vessels" of the Holy Spirit by which Yah's love is revealed to the world. Even though we are made (or re-made) into the Father's perfect image, and therefore come from perfect plans... and even though we are sanctified through our joyful obedience to His instructions, and are therefore "constructed" flawlessly, this is still not enough for survival in this world. Even Yah's perfect plans are met with great force from the Enemy, and therefore we must trust not only in His initial will for our lives, but also His ongoing protection. Consider:

"And when the servant of the man of Elohim was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, 'Alas, my master! How shall we do?'

"And he answered, 'Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.' And Elisha prayed, and said, 'Yahweh, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.' And Yahweh opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. (2Kings 6:15-17)

When He was in danger of being arrested, the Savior referenced this scene, saying to His worried disciples, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Mat 26:53)

The question might be asked, "Why does Yah give us the ministry of His angels?" In many religions, the god of their worship does it all, directly, himself. Why does the Lord of the Universe use intelligent servants, rather than His own presence, and the forces of the universe directly?

It is because Yah is love. It is because of His character. It pleases Yahweh to enlist intelligence, which is His greatest creation. The freely-offered service of His creations, both angelic and human, are important to Him. We are made in His image, made able to choose to act according to moral principles, and to recognize, and rejoice in, that which is holy and righteous.

Unlike the false gods of various religions, Yahweh the Almighty is a Creator of beings who are – in a sense – like Himself. They are capable of free thought, of love, of making choices... and when we, in our freedom, by Yahweh's own grace, choose to render unto Him our worship, our service, and our love, we affirm the eternal value of the principles of His character.

It is not for pride, or anything "carnal," that causes the Father of Spirits to reveal His brightness and glory to us. He knows that He is the source of life everlasting, and our acknowledgement of that is merely an acknowledgement of truth. Much the same is true of the angels. Those who remain in the Heavenly Courts have chosen to remain in the light of truth and beauty, and they have been appointed our helpers, our guardians, our necessary defenders against the fierce, active movements of the "roaring lion" (1Pet 5:8) that is our Enemy.

These are dark days, and dangerous ones, dangerous physically, mentally, and spiritually. All that we are, as Yah's People, is under constant threat of destruction, and we know that only by the

service of our friends and fellow-servants, the angels, according to the will of our Father, we are kept safe.

Recently, in my daily prayers, I have begun to express thanks for the ministry of angels. Even with Yah's perfect plans, and even with the victory He has won for us at infinite cost, we are still vulnerable to Satan's attacks, and our Father has permitted it to be so. We are told to put on the "whole armor of God" to withstand these attacks, (Eph. 6:11) advice that is only reasonable if we are, in fact, being targeted by the fallen ones.

Let us not be proud, then, but humble, and recognize our moment-by-moment dependence on our Father, and let us rejoice with thanksgiving in His protection over us, given by His Spirit, by the Church Family through which He expresses His wisdom, and through the legions of angels that stand guard over us until the Great Controversy finally comes to a close.

Are there any comments or questions about the study tonight?

Adriel: Amen! C

Elyna: Nattie: Amen!

PastorChick: C

Zahakiel: Go ahead.

Adriel: I praise Yahweh for the protection of His angels, even when I wasn't surrendered to Him, and for their watch care over our trip here. 😊 End

Zahakiel: Go ahead, Pastor.

PastorChick: Yesterday, after our clinic was closed, a car drove into our drive. It was the Kisoro District Health Inspector and his assistant. The Spirit told me these were "important people" but I did not know who they were. A hospital nurse, who has been attending our Sabbath services and visiting our clinic regularly had accompanied them and she revealed to me their office and I greeted them with a professional presence. The inspector claimed to need our services while the assistant observed. I perceived the ministry of angels during the session and near the end, I detected that both men were Muslim in faith. I explained that a critical part of our treatment plan is a spiritual component and that prayer is one aspect of it. I offered to pray, and they accepted. Hours afterward, Sis. Barb received a text message from the nurse saying, "The way you welcomed him can make him better without drugs." "The way you welcomed him was good to make him better." These "important men" are often sent by Satan on a mission of terror and destruction but, by the protection of YAH's Spirit and the ministry of angels we are blessed to overcome the enemy's designs.

Peter: Amen.

PastorChick: and win hearts for the glory of YAH. END.

Adriel: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen 😊

victoria joined the chat

Zahakiel: Any others?

Peter: C:

Zahakiel: Go ahead.

Peter: I must praise Yah for his protection this week at work. I was welding last night a swimming platform on the back of the boat I was working on and as I was welding my left sleeve caught fire and I was not aware of it. It was after I was finishing welding that I felt my arm warm and I looked and saw that my arm was on fire. I put the welding wipe down and used my right hand to put the fire out. I lifted my helmet up and saw that a 6 inches diameter was burnt out above my gloves on the overalls. I had a long sleeve sweater on under the coveralls and it did not get burnt. I just smiled and say thank you Yah for your protection. I always do the welding in the same manner and it never happened before but this time it did. I just have to keep smiling and thank my angel who was by my side. End.

Zahakiel: Thank you for sharing that. 😊 Anyone else?

Adriel: Amen

Zahakiel: All right, then I will ask Bro. Luke to offer a closing prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for the constant ministry of your angels on our behalf. We are thankful for the opportunity to labor and learn alongside them, on your behalf. We ask for the continued guidance and wisdom of your Spirit as we enter into the sacred Sabbath hours. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

Peter_JR_1718: Amen.

Adriel: Amen

Elyna: Amen

Barb: Amen Daphna: Amen, PC: Amen

Peter: Amen.

PastorChick: Amen.

Naraiel: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen