

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

Zahakiel: Dear Father in Heaven. We give you thanks for the sacred Sabbath hours, and for the Feast of Unleavened Bread in which it falls. We thank you for the many blessings of this week, as we meet with your people, and as we bear your testimony to the world. May this time of sanctifying rest refresh us from our labors, and fill us with your power to accomplish your perfect will in the days to come. We ask this in Yahshua's holy name. Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Barb: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Naraiel: Amen

Lucan: Welcome to the Sabbath meeting of the feast of unleavened bread 2018. While we are far apart physically, we are blessed with the unity of the Spirit promised us by our Savior, and the opportunity to fellowship in Yah's Word.

The Scriptures use leaven to describe both wrong doctrine and wrong spirits; both false beliefs and the sins they lead to. As it is with bread, so it is with souls; adding water and oil to wheat causes it to bind together and form a strong, new, unified substance. Leaven causes the bond to stretch thin and separate, until the loaf is "puffed up" and full of air. But bread without leaven is dense; it is "pressed together," without corruption or separation. As Adventists, we are counseled to "press together;" [1T 113, 2SM 374] as Christians, we are counseled not to be "puffed up." (1 Cor. 13:4, 4:6)

In Law and in Testimony, in Scripture and in Inspiration, we are given what is necessary for our purification. Tonight we will be looking at these matters through the lens of one who was similarly bestowed with things necessary for their purification:

"And the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her things for purification, with such things as belonged to her, and seven maidens, [which were] meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and he preferred her and her maids unto the best [place] of the house of the women. Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her." (Esther 2:9, 15) (LMK)

Pastor Chick: F

Barb: F

daphna dee: F

Elyna: F

Peter_Jr_18: F

Zahakiel: Finished.

Lucan: The book of Esther is a lesson book for the remnant people of Yahweh in the last days. Through the symbol of a heathen king, Yahweh Himself is represented in relation with His people; through the death decree, Satan's final attempt at eradicating that people finds a type, or a shadow. The first bride of the King refused to show forth the glory given to her, requiring another to be called to fill her place. Even so, the Adventist church refused to send forth the loud cry in the power and glory given her, and another was called to fill her place.

Esther, as with the true Church, "required nothing" but what was appointed. No garments of self, no vain decorations, no legal or physical protection; and because of this she "obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her." The last generation of Yahweh's people rest in no power, no protection, no righteousness but that which is provided for them by and through Yahshua.

Yet Esther was not chosen as queen for her own benefit, any more than for her adornments. Within a short time we find a plotter seeking the destruction of Yah's people, and a call to intercession:

"Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, [then] shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for [such] a time as this?" (Esther 4:13, 14)

Note the warning and the faith sounded by Mordecai; if Esther were to hide from her duty, and fail to intercede on behalf of the people, she and her house would be destroyed. Yet more than this, the newly exalted queen was told that if she should stay silent, "there shall enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place."

To those who have stayed silent amid persecution, or worse yet played the oppressor, the sentence comes down through the ages; destruction is on them and their father's house, while Yahweh has wrought enlargement and deliverance through another. Yahweh's purposes will not be frustrated; He will have a people to perform the work of intercession in the last days, and a faithful remnant during the time of trouble.

It was "for such a time as this" that Esther was raised up, even as it was "for such a time as this" that Adventism was raised up. Both were to prepare a people to stand in the Day of Judgment, and to intercede on behalf of those who had yet to decide whether to stay in Babylon. Esther would not have been queen had she submitted herself in her own pomp and pride rather than simple faith in the appointed provisions.

If we are not purged of the leaven of wickedness and false teachings, we will be unqualified to intercede on behalf of others, for we require it ourselves. Let us heed well the admonition to "purge ye out therefore the old leaven" (1 Cor. 5:7), for eternal destinies are involved.

In this particular interaction with Mordecai, we see a principle that is intimately connected with doctrinal leaven in this age; that of conditional prophecy. While one may be raised up for a purpose, it is their own choices that determine whether they fulfill those purposes, or whether deliverance arises from another place and in another manner than expected. If conditional prophecy is not well understood, many errors of old leaven will be allowed to spring up. Had the early Christians understood this well, they would have been less susceptible to the plague of Judaizers that came quoting the promises, covenants, and requirements of the fallen house.

One may read Jeremiah or Isaiah and come away believing they need to become a literal circumcised Jew, expecting the land and nation of Israel to be delivered by a conquering Messiah. One may read Ellen White and come away believing they need to become a Conference Seventh-day Adventist, expecting a literal Sunday law to finally test their faith. Both of these errors come from a lack of context – Jeremiah himself describes conditional prophecy in the plainest terms of any Bible author (Jer. 18:5-10), and Ellen White herself states the circumstances and reasons for expecting a Sunday law as the final test. Much of her understanding regarding the expected Sunday “death decree” came from the book of Esther, and tonight we will be looking at both the Scriptures and Mrs. White’s writings on this subject.

What was it that instigated the decree against the people of God in the days of Esther?

We see the complaint of Haman, one who was greatly favored and exalted:

“And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all [the things] wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king. . . Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.” (Esther 5:11, 13)

Haman had wealth, even as a church that’s merchants are the great men of the earth, playing the stock market to purchase all manner of illicit wares. He had multitudes of children, even as a church whose worldwide membership is its greatest boast. He was promoted and advanced of the king, even as a church whose reputation and authority is established by Federal law. “Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.” The spirit of discontent will never be satisfied by attainments, relationships, wealth, family, power, or respect. Let the people of Yahweh depart from all such false idols that cannot save, and rather rest in the peace that passes all understanding.

Why was Haman so displeased at Mordecai’s presence? We read a few verses earlier:

“Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.” (Esther 5:9)

Haman was unwilling to be content with his exaltation, power, and wealth; if one did not revere him, he must destroy that one and his people. This is the same spirit as a church who, for all of its power, influence, and wealth, seeks out and imprisons any and all – “small or great, rich or poor, free or bond” – who do not bow down to them in deference.

Yet why should Haman have ever expected Mordecai to do such a thing? We read:

“And all the king's servants, that [were] in the king's gate, bowed, and revered Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did [him] reverence. Then the king's servants, which [were] in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?” (Esther 3:2, 3)

Let us take note – “the king had so commanded concerning him.” It was the command of the king that all should bow and reverence Haman. It is the command of the second beast that all should bow and reverence the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Of those who refuse, the question is asked by the king’s servants – “Why do you transgress the king’s commandment?” “Why do you violate the law? Why do you not bow down, and acknowledge them to be what the king has declared – the only Seventh-day Adventist church?”

It takes little effort to find the dynamics of the trademark law in the Scriptures regarding Esther, Haman, and Mordecai. Yet there was a time when it was expected that this would be fulfilled in a law requiring acknowledgment of Sunday. We have seen the Scriptures on the matter; let us read a bit into the inspired commentary:

“The trying experiences that came to God’s people in the days of Esther were not peculiar to that age alone. The revelator, looking down the ages to the close of time, has declared, “The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17. Some who today are living on the earth will see these words fulfilled. The same spirit that in ages past led men to persecute the true church, will in the future lead to the pursuance of a similar course toward those who maintain their loyalty to God. Even now preparations are being made for this last great conflict.” [PK 605]

“Some who today are living on the earth” were those expecting the Sunday law fulfilled. “Even now preparations are being made” was the testimony in the late 1800s. Let me speak freely to you of Mrs. White; she is both dead and buried, and her grave is with us unto this day. Neither are her children alive; neither are her grandchildren alive. Did those then living see the expected fulfillment? Are those same preparations being made? The more familiar we are with the context of her day, the more clearly the answer is “no.”

Let us continue:

“The decree that will finally go forth against the remnant people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews. Today the enemies of the true church see in the little company keeping the Sabbath commandment, a Mordecai at the gate. The

reverence of God's people for His law is a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling on His Sabbath." [PK 605]

Is this true of the enemies of the true church "today?" The first question to answer here, of course, is "what is the true church, and who are its enemies?"

As Creation 7th Day Adventists – "the true church" – are our persecutors those who keep Sunday, or those who keep Saturday? Is Sabbath keeping a "constant rebuke" to Protestants, as it was "today" in the late 1800s?

Take note; this is the core, spiritual motivation for the persecution.

Does the Protestant world seem particularly disturbed by the Saturday-keeping of their Adventist companions, with whom they clasp hands in fellowship and in councils on a regular basis? Have not the daughters of Babylon received the Conference brand of Seventh-day Adventism – Sabbath-keeping and all – with open arms upon such points of doctrine as they have compromised? Shall a church that has made every conceivable concession to placate and win the approval of the Protestant world be hated by them for what has already been accepted? Shall a church that imprisons those of their own faith rather than risk offending Sunday-keepers be a "constant rebuke" to those Sunday-keepers, earning their ire?

No such circumstances exist, although the "constant rebuke" of Creation 7th Day Adventists to Seventh-day Adventists is well documented, as they have "cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling on His Sabbath." And what has been the result?

"Satan will arouse indignation against the minority who refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt. Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith. By false representations and angry appeals, men will stir up the passions of the people." [PK 605] (LMK)

Pastor Chick: F

Zahakiel: Finished.

Elyna: F

Peter: F

Peter_Jr_18: F

daphna dee: F

Barb: F

Lucan: In every particular CSDAs have seen, and continue to see, these words fulfilled. In every particular Seventh-day Adventists cannot see this fulfilled via a Sunday law, for they are no such "minority who refuse to accept popular customs;" no such "hated sect, little known to the Catholics" as was prophesied elsewhere. [SpM 1.5]

Instead, they are exalted upon "the glory of their riches, and the multitude of their children, and all [the things] wherein the king had promoted them, and how he had advanced them" above all other Adventists. Yet all this avails them nothing so long as they see CSDAs standing in the gate; for "they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." (Rev. 14:11)

"Not having a "Thus saith the Scriptures" to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for Sunday laws." [PK 605]

Is there a "demand for Sunday laws" that legislators may yield to, in order to "secure popularity and patronage?" Brethren, we have Americans among us; I would challenge any with a question on this matter to contact their representative and ask how many calls and letters they have received demanding Sunday laws. Please let me know if any of them answer something other than "zero."

Yet all these things were expected in the days of Mrs. White; they were expected to happen to those "alive on the earth today," as a result of "preparations now being made," and political movements then happening. Little of this is news to honest Adventists who have read the testimonies on this matter and their context; yet the old leaven is hard to remove, for as with the Jewish covenant, the writings appear to support it.

Yet those same writings are absent of even the slightest inkling of a notion of what must now be invented to maintain a Sunday law belief. No intimation was given that a century and a half would pass before the "preparations now being made" would be undone, then redone, then implemented. No indication of the world becoming secularized and the society atheistic; no account of Protestantism abandoning any idea of the Scriptures as authoritatively supporting them – the very belief that caused them to be rebuked to rage by Sabbath-keepers.

All of these things are incompatible with the Sunday law as expected. To mistake the application of a prophecy for the prophecy itself is to teach tradition as the truth. To maintain that the Sunday law was a definitive prophecy and not an application OF a definitive prophecy (the mark of the beast), one must invent a way to explain these and other issues. Some do this by concluding that the mark will happen as Mrs. White wrote it would in her time, ignoring the test before their eyes, yet are forced to acknowledge that the reality is incompatible with such a turn of events. These conclude that the world must so change as to revert back to where it was in the 1800s in terms of religious zeal and Sunday legislation, raising popular demand and giving legislators opportunity to comply. No one who believes this message is an Adventist, for this view requires so much time as to put the Advent effectively beyond any possibility in our lifetimes. If Christ cannot come until there is a Sunday law, and no Sunday law is on the horizon – rather the opposite – then Christ's coming is not on the horizon. Thus, "peace and safety" is the message from those who will never again raise their voices in protest. Thus, those who hold to the Sunday law as a test of true Adventism must themselves surrender any belief in a soon-coming Advent, and the core belief of Adventism itself.

Still others will maintain the Sunday law itself as inevitable, but ignore all context and details about how and why it arises. These become conspiracy theorists, combing land and sea for one morsel of vindication. We are told to expect "popular demand" to sway legislators, yet these herald the Pope himself promoting Sunday as somehow a sign of the end times. We are told the mark will begin in the U.S. as per Revelation 13 [6T 395], yet these make a mountain out of any Sunday acknowledgment or enforcement in the world, as though it proved instead of disproved their expectations. This is a doctrine borne of desperation.

We may see, then, the dangers of this leaven; it leads to sleepiness and unbelief on the one hand, or fanaticism and conspiracies on the other. How will we awake these sleeping ones if we ourselves are not awake to the times in which we live? How can one offer a sound reason for their faith when both sound reason and the faith defy their doctrine?

While Adventists are jailed and exiled, their property confiscated and their ministries persecuted, many are content to do what Esther refused to, and "hold their peace." And why? Their view of the end times requires them to "wait for the Sunday law;" all else must be a distraction.

If it is not the principle of the mark of the beast that is to be protested, but rather the "letter of the law," then the trademark becomes a distraction, a side issue; a smaller test before the "real one," leading many to refuse to take a stand. Many will receive the mark for this reason; they saw the principles involved, but were waiting for another.

When Yahshua came the first time, He was rejected by those who saw the right Spirit and the right principles, but were waiting for "the real deliverer" to come, saving Israel not from its sins but from its physical oppressors per the misunderstood prophecies. When Yahshua comes the second time, He will have been rejected by those who saw the right Spirit and right principles, but were waiting for the "real test" to come, verifying their rote obedience rather than their heart, per similarly misunderstood prophecies. A Sunday law tests the acts of obedience; the trademark tests the spirit of obedience.

"Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which [is] not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish." (Esther 4:16)

The Adventism of today is put to abject shame by the example of Esther. While false professors and lukewarm teachers cry "peace and safety" over the sounds of persecution, [5T 211], this woman, having no promise of deliverance, took the responsibility of intercession. [5T 209]. She acted "not according to the law," and concluded of her own life, "if I perish, I perish." This queen would rather die than keep silent to save herself while others perished. This queen would rather risk her own life than sit idly by when the call to action was sounded. This queen was not content to wait for "deliverance from another means," but when the emergency came she fasted, prayed, and took action.

Apostate Protestants are enforcing the mark of their name on God's commandment-keeping people. The destiny of Yah's people is decided by their response to the image of the beast, and to each one the decision comes – which queen will we identify with? There is one that refuses to come when she is called by the King, and stays silent til she is put away forever; yet says in her heart, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." The other refuses to stay silent even when not called, choosing to perish rather than let persecution go unopposed against the people of Yahweh. One queen hides when she is summoned; the other scorns concealment, unfurling her banner in the midst of those who had sought the lives of her brethren.

Let us diligently and thoroughly purge all leaven, and awake – the bridegroom cometh, and we are to call others to go out to meet Him.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any [man] will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:24-26)

Are there any comments or questions on the study tonight? If there are none, I'll ask Pastor to offer a closing prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in Heaven. Thank You for this timely presentation of present truth, and may all believers put the leaven from their house and give the Loud Cry before the curtain of probation closes for this world. As CSDA Christians, we have our commission, and it is time to press the battle to the gates as never before. Thank You for the edification to be who we are. In Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

Barb: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Peter: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Natty: amen.