

Perplexity

Qinael : Father in Heaven,

We thank you for this appointed time of cleansing, examination, and sanctification.

We ask that your Spirit be with each in attendance, guiding hearts and minds by your Spirit into full conformity to your will.

In the name of Yahshua we pray, amen.

Barbli : Amen.

Guest_Giselle : Amen.

Adriel : Amen.

Guest_Elyna_GloriaS : Amen.

Guest_eagle : Amen.

Guest_daphna : Amen.

kimberlykindhearted : Amen.

Pastor_Chick_CSDA : Amen.

Guest_Peter : Amen.

Zahakiel : Amen.

This month's study is called "perplexity," and it is about a word that we have been hearing quite a bit of lately, especially if you have been keeping track of religious news.

You have heard those in the CSDA Church speak of being "perplexed" at the problems facing our evangelistic endeavors. You have heard a false prophet (the one who predicted that a pre-tribulation Rapture would occur on March 21st) "flabbergasted" by the fact that nothing happened on the date of his prediction.

And yet, there is a very marked contrast between these two instances of perplexity, which reveal exactly where, and with whom, the Holy Spirit of Yahweh is truly working. As I mentioned before we began, while I don't think this will take a long time to examine, and so we can discuss forum issues afterward, I think you will admit it is a most timely message, and one from which we can learn a great deal in our own personal paths of refinement.

Let us start this study by going to the Scriptures and examining the record of Biblical heroes enduring perplexity because of various factors.

Here is the first, and perhaps most famous, example:

"And it came to pass after these things, that Elohim did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, 'Abraham,' and he said, 'Behold, here I am.' And He said, 'Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.'

“And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

“And Abraham said unto his young men, ‘Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.’ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

“And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, ‘My father,’ and he said, ‘Here am I, my son.’ And he said, ‘Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?’ And Abraham said, ‘My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.’ So they went both of them together.”
(Gen 22:1-8)

Let me know when you’ve finished reading what I have posted.

Qinael : Finished.

Pastor_Chick_CSDA : Finished.

Guest_Za_afiel1316 : Done.

Guest_Elyna_GloriaS : Finished.

kimberlykindhearted : Done.

Barbli : Finished.

Guest_daphna : Finished.

Guest_eagle : Finished.

Adriel : Done.

Zahakiel: While the narrative itself does not use the word “perplexed,” one cannot imagine any other state of mind for Abraham than perplexity. Yahweh, who had given him a son in a miraculous manner, long after he expected an heir, is now instructing him to take his only remaining inheritor (for Ishmael had already been sent away) and sacrifice him in a way that He had never commanded a sacrifice before.

This was not a short trip either. We note from the passage that the journey took at least three days; much time for temptation and doubt to attack the saint. Adventists are given a little extra insight, being told in the Spirit of Prophecy books that Abraham was so shaken by the instruction that Yah sent him a sign, a light on top of the mountain, to strengthen him along the way. But Abraham continued on his mission, and ultimately received his son “back from the dead” figuratively, and in a way that foreshadowed – even all the way back then in the Bible – the death of Christ, and the substitute provided for the sinner.

Here is another example:

“And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto Yahweh because of the Midianites, that Yahweh sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, ‘Thus saith Yahweh, Elohim of Israel, ‘I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage; and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land.

““And I said unto you, I am Yahweh your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell... but ye have not obeyed my voice.’

“And there came an angel of Yahweh, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite; and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.

“And the angel of Yahweh appeared unto him, and said unto him, ‘Yahweh is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.’

“And Gideon said unto him, ‘Oh my Lord, if Yahweh be with us, why then is all this befallen us? And where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, ‘Did not Yahweh bring us up from Egypt? But now Yah hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.’

And Yahweh looked upon him, and said, ‘Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?’

“And he said unto him, ‘Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.” (Judges 6:7-15)

Let me know when you have read this one.

Qinael : Finished.

Pastor_Chick_CSDA : Finished.

kimberlykindhearted : Finished.

Guest_Elyna_GloriaS : Finished.

Guest_eagle : Finished.

Guest_Ruthline : Finished.

Barbli : Finished.

Adriel : Finished.

Guest_daphna : Finished.

Guest_Za_afiel1316 : Done.

Zahakiel: Here is a place where Yahweh “callesh those things which be not as though they were” (Rom 4:17) in such a way as to be a bit ironic. Here is Gideon hiding his little bit of grain because he is afraid it will be stolen by the Midianites, and the Angel appears to him and says, “God is with you, oh brave man.” Well, the truth is, Gideon was about to do great works of valor, but like Moses, he did not yet know what he was capable of when doing the will of the Almighty.

We find him here, perplexed. It is known to the reader of Judges why these pagan nations were being allowed to overrun Israel. A few verses up Yah tells the people through the testimony of a prophet, “ye have not obeyed my voice.” Reading through Judges, every few chapters begins with, “And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of Yahweh...” (Jud 4:1, 6:1, 13:1) But this does not mean that every individual Israelite knew of this testimony. It was often the case that the leaders sinned, and the people suffered under the principle of corporate accountability.

Many modern Adventists would find themselves “perplexed” to discover that they are under judgment... which is why it is the duty of those who know the truth to warn them about the modern day calves of gold erected by this generation's Jeroboam. (1Kings 12:26-33)

But here we see Gideon confused, and by several things. First, by why Israel is in such a state. Second, by the fact that Yah has not yet delivered them from their condition, considering the miracles that He had performed on their behalf during the departure from Egypt. Third, he is perplexed by the fact that this Angel has spoken to him, the youngest son of a poor family from one of the sub-tribes of Israel. And note, as a brief aside, that the author switches from “the Angel of Yahweh” to “Yahweh” quite smoothly, showing that this is Christ Himself, bearing the Name of the Father, as the intermediary to mankind.

The rest of that section of the Book of Judges reveals that Gideon did overcome Israel’s enemies, at least until the next incident of national apostasy.

In the days of Esther, we read (and I want you to be looking for similarities here): “The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree [to destroy the Jews] was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed. When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry, and came even before the king's gate, for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

“And Hatach (one of the king’s servants) came and told Esther the words of Mordecai. 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?’” (Est 3:15; 4:1,2, 9, 13, 14)

Let me know when you are ready to continue.

Pastor_Chick_CSDA : Ready.

Guest_Za_afiel1316 : Ready.

Guest_Giselle : Ready.

Qinael : Ready.

Guest_daphna : Finished.

Guest_Ruthline : Ready.

kimberlykindhearted : Done.

Guest_eagle : Ready.

Guest_Peter : Ok.

Adriel : Ok.

Guest_Elyna_GloriaS : Ready.

Barbli : Ok.

Zahakiel: One last example, from the New Testament, and the greatest example that can be found:

“And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane, and He saith to His disciples, ‘Sit ye here, while I shall pray.’ And He taketh with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed [this word means ‘perplexed’ in this setting], and to be very heavy, and saith unto them, ‘My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.’

“And He went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, ‘Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me.

Nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.” (Mar 14:32-36) This happened twice more, with Yahshua always saying nearly the same thing each time. (verse 39)

We have encountered some individuals, under the general title of “Adventist” who have adopted some very peculiar notions of Yahshua’s earthly mission. One individual, for example, was convinced – and tried to convince me –that Yahshua was omniscient (all-knowing) even in His human incarnation. This is an absurdity both scientifically (because the brain simply cannot hold “all” knowledge) and, more importantly, spiritually. Yahshua was given to us not only as a sacrifice in death, but as an example in life. He did nothing that we could not do, and the Scriptures tell us that He “humbled” Himself to take on our nature, that we should have no excuse, and find ourselves condemned as sinners in order to realize our condition and cling to the Savior and be redeemed.

Adventists have long, and rightly, taught that if any excuse could be found for sin, it would cease to be sin; if we had no choice in our actions, we cannot be guilty of violating a law of love. And along the same lines, if the One who came to set us a perfect example of the sinless life had any advantage over us, Satan would find himself justified in his claims that the law of God is unreasonable, harsh, and only able to be kept with personal, divine power. It is true that the law can only be kept with divine power, but Christians have access to that power only by obtaining it from the Father. And Yahshua, He did it exactly that way to show us how.

That Yahshua was “amazed,” perplexed, when He contemplated the cross (and the Spirit of Prophecy again adds a little information, clarifying that He could not see beyond His death, and could not embrace the thoughts of what His ministry would accomplish) is proof positive that He was not given any special insights beyond that which a very mortal prophet might receive from time to time faced with that kind of mission. It is this, this humility unto death, that made Him a worthy sacrifice for all humanity.

So what shall we say, then? What is common to all these examples?

What are your thoughts at this point?

kimberlykindhearted : None of them could understand why Yah was apparently asking them to go against His defined will.

Guest_Za_afiel1316 : They were all perplexed, and could not see ahead of what could happen to them.

Zahakiel : Well, that this was apparently true, leading to the perplexity in the first place. But I am looking for something common in the specific examples I have listed.

Guest_eagle : Humility

Qinael : All of them were in response to an instruction or decree from someone else.

Zahakiel7917 : Humility is an aspect of all these individuals, yes.

What do you mean by decree from someone else?

Qinael : Well, the example in Esther wasn't in response to a revelation by Yahweh, for example. You opened by comparing these with the Harold Camping fellow, who was perplexed when his ideas and predictions failed.

Qinael : All of these were perplexed by something they were instructed to do, or have done to them.

Guest_Giselle : they continue to work for Yahweh, in the middle of their perplexity.

Zahakiel7917 : Well, yes, the instructions in all these cases came from Yahweh, which is why I chose these examples. Now, what Giselle said is getting to what I am really looking at.

Pastor_Chick_CSDA : The common element I am seeing is faith/trust in YAH.

Zahakiel7917 : That is, cause to effect... the results of their actions.

Zahakiel7917 : And yes, as pastor said, that is the direct result of their maintaining trust and faith.

Zahakiel7917 : So there is the cause, and there is the effect

Guest_daphna : They did not trust , because it was not the way they expected,

Zahakiel7917 : Well, it is true it was not the way they expected... but you will see a difference between how they handled it, and how those who were not Yah's handled it:

We can look at a couple counterexamples just very briefly to underscore this commonality, and see just how different it is for those in the world. Here is one such case:

“And Yahweh said, ‘Behold, the people [of Shinar] is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do, and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.’ So Yahweh scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city [of Babylon].” (Gen 11:6-8)

Another, “Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by [Yahshua], and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead, and of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. And Herod said, ‘John have I beheaded, but who is this, of whom I hear such things?’ And he desired to see Him.” (Luke 9:7-9)

But Herod never did meet Yahshua; and even during His trial, the Messiah was taken from High Priest to Governor and back, but never to the tetrarch set up to govern the Jews by Rome.

We find that those who are perplexed while on Yah's side, and within His will, continue to do what they were doing and even greater things... and ultimately succeed in their goal. Those who are perplexed outside of Yah's will (and we can add to the two examples above people like Pharaoh, Balaam, Ahab and Jezebel) allow the perplexity to deter them from their goals, and ultimately they do nothing. The man who predicted the departure of Christians for Heaven on the 21st of May has now said that they will instead be taken when the world “ends” in October, but since all cases have been decided in the invisible judgment on May 21st, they do not need to do anything more to warn people.

However he may justify it, his work has ceased. We could go into detail about why the pre-tribulation rapture is wrong in the first place, how his mathematical calculations bordered on the incomprehensible, and why his entire timeline of last day events is way off... but we don't need to do that. All we have to do is look at how the true men of Yah have dealt with perplexity in the inspired record. They endured, they pressed forward, and they were victorious.

Pastor_Chick_CSDA : Amen!

Some, with a casual knowledge of Adventist history, have compared this recent failed prediction to the 1844 disappointment in a way, but look at the difference in the results! The Adventist message took on great power after the disappointment, leading to the Three Angels being sent forth into the earth. We can draw great encouragement, great inspiration, from that knowledge.

Now, this does not mean they sat back and waiting to see the benefits come to them. Paul says this, using the very word we are studying today: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Yahshua, that the life also of Yahshua might be made manifest in our body." (2Cor 4:7-10)

Even when we admit to feeling perplexity, we are pressing forward, and doing so actively. Even when we admit that we do not clearly see beyond the next few steps, we are doing so with the earnest expectation that Yah will supply the want. We do not stop working, as did the Babylonians. The feeling of perplexity is not, among the saints, an indication that anything is necessarily wrong – a big difference from the cases of worldly perplexity. It does not mean we misunderstood, or miscalculated. But as we do experience these times, we continue to do the work we are called to do. We do not cease to build, as again those constructing the Tower of Babel did. We do not draw back our plans to see the Messiah, as Herod did. We do not sit in our homes and wait for the Day of Judgment to fall upon the world and make all our problems vanish away, as some are doing this very day across the world.

We bear about the dying of Yahshua with us, and some have rightly said that He began dying right there in the garden of Gethsemane, when amazement, when perplexity, took Him. We follow in His footsteps, even into the darkness of an uncertain future. We cannot see beyond the next few moves, and the Father would have it be that way, so that He can guide us by the hand. But we can have comfort, a comfort not available to Abraham, Moses, Gideon and the others. We have a comfort not consciously available to Yahshua until after the garden. We have a long record of the faithfulness of the Father in Heaven. We have the promises of a sure covenant, and that He will not let us be held up to shame by the world for very long.

We are given this verse, one of many that we have the pleasure of calling to mind whenever we wish: "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defence; I shall not be moved." (Psa 62:5, 6) The word "moved" there, taken literally, means to be shaken, as in an earthquake... but clearly the understanding is to be one of an emotional or spiritual "shaking," and we find that waiting upon the salvation of Yah is the way to keep moving forward, even if the way ahead seems to be obscure.

So, as I mentioned, a relatively brief study, but one full of meaning for us in these last days, and one I hope will be a great blessing as we contemplate these principles.

Are there any comments or questions as we close?

Guest_eagle : Amen!

Adriel : Thank-you.

Guest_Giselle : No questions.

Guest_Ruthline : No.

Qinael : No.

Guest_Peter : No.

Guest_daphna : No.

Guest_Za_afiel1316 : No.

Barbli : No.

Guest_Elyna_GloriaS : No.

kimberlykindhearted : No.

Zahakiel : Ok. Pastor, will you offer the closing prayer?

Pastor_Chick_CSDA : Dear Father in Heaven...

Pastor_Chick_CSDA : Thank you for the perseverance of the saints exemplifying the faith and trust required to go forward in the darkness of uncertainty.

Pastor_Chick_CSDA : We praise You for Your faithfulness to Your children.

Pastor_Chick_CSDA : Dismiss this, our formal meeting, in the name of YAHSHUA, AMEN!

Zahakiel : Amen.

Barbli : Amen.

Guest_Elyna_GloriaS : Amen.

Guest_Giselle : Amen.

Guest_eagle : Amen.

Adriel : Amen :)

Guest_daphna : Amen.

kimberlykindhearted : Amen :)

Guest_Peter : Amen.

Guest_Ruthline : Amen.

Guest_Za_afiel1316 : Amen.