



The Book of Acts Lesson 11 3Q 2018 Arrest in Jerusalem

by Tim Jennings (announcements at end)

SABBATH

Paul was passionate to reach the Jewish people. He really longed for this to happen. As he wrote in Romans 9:3 “For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel.”

I thought a lot about Paul this week. Paul loved his Jewish people, his church—Paul was educated by his church. I was raised in the SDA church, and I was educated both in church and church schools. And like Paul, I love my church.

Paul was taught the Scripture from his church and church school education, as was I.

But could Paul hold to the interpretations of Scripture he was taught in his upbringing?

When Paul moved past the traditional interpretations of his church how did his church respond?

Now, was the problem primarily a problem that they disagreed on doctrinal points, circumcision or not circumcision—was that the real problem or merely a focal point of the problem?

They did disagree on certain doctrinal points, but why did anyone care about that?

What was the real problem between Paul and the Jewish leadership?

What method did Saul of Tarsus utilize when he was trying to turn people away from Christ back to Judaism?

What method did Paul use after his conversion?

What method did the Jewish leadership use on Paul and the other Apostles when they disagreed on points of doctrine?

We in the SDA church talk a lot about the beast of revelation—what constitutes being part of the beastly system?

Is it primarily about holding the wrong understanding of a doctrine—or about practicing the wrong methods in how one lives—in other words, character?

What methods does the beastly system utilize? –coercive pressure to force others to comply.



If one accepts the lie about God's law and believes God's law functions like human law, imperial rules requiring external enforcement, can you predict what methods will ultimately be employed?

Are there any church denominations that are free of the false law construct?

Are there any church denominations that are immune from using the methods of the beast—the methods of coercion?

It is with mixed feelings—sadness that this is true, but hope that it is being brought out into the open to discuss...

Some of you may have read the article that came out August 28, 2018 in Spectrum Magazine by George Knight, a well-respected SDA historian.

The title of the Article is *Adventism's Shocking Fulfillment of Prophecy*

Here's the link to the article:

<https://spectrummagazine.org/article/2018/08/28/adventism%E2%80%99s-shocking-fulfillment-prophecy>

Here's a short portion from the article for your thoughts:

For over 150 years the Seventh-day Adventist Church has faithfully preached the message of Revelation 13 that near the end of time “all the world marveled and followed the beast,” who had recovered from the deadly wound (13:3, NKJV). And at the heart of the Adventist concern was verse 7's prophecy that the beast would “make war with the saints” and “overcome them.”

What was not predicted by the Adventist evangelists was that the General Conference leadership would be joining the beast in its eschatological crusade, with the denomination's president leading the charge.

He goes on to document in quite meticulous detail the recent moves by the GC leadership to centralize power with a top-down authoritarian structure to enforce doctrinal orthodoxy on threat of punishment, firing from job, expulsion from membership, withholding funds etc.

He describes in accurate detail the same structure and method used by the Roman Catholic Church in its hierarchal design, then goes on to say:

One of the more interesting facts of history is that it took the bishops of Rome 600 years to develop an effective papacy with control over the worldwide church, while Silver Spring is on track to do so in a little more than 150.



I want to pause here and make some comments. It took the bishops of Rome 600 years because they were undermining the good fabric of God's design law of love established by Christ and the Apostles. Thus, it took 600 years to fully replace that understanding with the imperial lie. However, the SDA church has never fulfilled its purpose and fully thrown off the imperial view of God's law and stood solely on God's design law. Thus, it has only taken 150 years for the smoldering lie of imperialism to reignite and take over the church leadership.

When reading the comments from readers of Dr. Knight's article I noticed one person who has been a vocal critic of this class—and not surprisingly, he voiced his support for the central leadership to use authoritarian measures to enforce its rules. It was argued a vote was taken and the majority vote should be abided by and the GC should enforce it.

Dr. Knight observed that during the reformation the princes of Germany had to take a stand against the established church authority, he quoted from *The Great Controversy*:

- “‘Let us reject this decree,’ said the princes. *‘In matters of conscience the majority has no power’*” (p. 201, italics supplied).
- “‘We protest...before God, our only Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Saviour, and who will one day be our Judge, as well as before all men and all creatures, that we...neither consent nor adhere in any manner whatsoever to the proposed decree, in anything that is contrary to God, to His holy word, to our right conscience, to the salvation of our souls’” (pp. 202-203).
- “‘A deep impression was made upon the Diet [by the protesting princes]. The majority were filled with amazement and alarm at the boldness of the protesters’” (p. 203).
- “‘The principles contained in this celebrated Protest...constitute the very essence of Protestantism. *Now this Protest opposes two abuses of man in matters of faith: the first is the intrusion of the civil magistrate, and the second the arbitrary authority of the church’*” (pp. 203-204, italics supplied).

Do we have a responsibility to think for ourselves in matters of conscience, to not submit to a church hierarchy, even if it is the church we love, if we are convinced they are wrong?

God's method is to present the truth in love and leave people free. This is the method God used in heaven with Lucifer started his rebellion.

The method of Satan is lies and coercion, threaten to punish if not followed.

Now, consider the functional difference in the ability to God's truth and love to spread throughout the hearts of human beings to prepare people to meet Jesus.

What method works best?

What happens to the ability of truth to spread if there is central power that coerces people if they should speak, teach or believe differently that the officially sanctioned view?



The spread of truth is undermined—look at the Dark Ages and the way the Roman church enforced their dogma.

This is why the SDA church was originally organized differently. The GC was set up to establish official positions of the organization, so that anyone who cared to know could find out what were the official positions of the church on any point the church took an official stance.

However, the SDA church was set up purposely so that the GC had no power to enforce its positions on anyone. The GC could not hire or fire pastors, it did not own church properties, it could not grant membership or disfellowship. The GC had no central authority—the authority rested with local congregations and local conferences.

Functionally, think of the beauty of this. How do new truths usually come forward in the world, in any line of study? Is it that all people throughout the world simultaneously come to the same understanding? Or is that a few individuals gain insight, share it with others in their community who study it, and when they understand and accept it share it with others and it slowly spreads?

Do you see that the top down enforcement of orthodoxy prevents this, it punishes expansion of truths that don't meet orthodoxy, and fires pastors who teach new truth, disfellowships members etc. But the local authority approach allows the organic growth and spread of truth and eventually when enough of the world church has come to the same insight the official position of the church will change in GC session.

Now recently, I received an email from someone who asked why I use the SDA study guide if I find so much fault with it. Why don't I just stop using it.

Some have thought that talking about these things is an attack, a negative, a method of undermining, injury, harming the church. I would counter, that in fact it is the opposite. When we love someone and we see them heading for a cliff we warn, we point out the danger, we contrast the healthy with the unhealthy so innocents will not be duped into following those bent on destruction.

This class is always about truth presented in love to bring people to a healing relationship with God—it is never about inciting harm or injury.

With all of this in mind, why am I not at the GC talking with them, why am I talking to you about this? Because truth expands from person to person, not from institutional top down methods.

Did Jesus try and convert the Sanhedrin? When confrontations arose between Jesus and the Jewish leadership, who initiated it?



SUNDAY

Read second paragraph, “In Acts 21:18-22, James and...” What is described here? What was Paul actually teaching?

- That circumcision of the body doesn’t save a person
- That circumcision of the body is a symbol of the true circumcision of the heart

Is teaching this the same thing as teaching that the Jews should not circumcise their children?

Why then, were the Jews alleging Paul was telling people not to circumcise their children, if Paul was not teaching this?

Because Paul was taking away a reason they falsely believed about circumcision—Paul was removing any special significance to the physical circumcision and thus, while he wasn’t telling the Jews they needed to stop, he was telling them it didn’t make any difference in salvation. They, therefore, having attributed a false meaning to circumcision, when that meaning was taken away misinterpreted what Paul was saying and falsely accused Paul.

This is exactly what we have experienced when we tell people that Jesus did not have to die in order to pay a legal penalty—those who hold the false legal view turn around and accuse us of saying that we don’t believe the death of Jesus was necessary for our salvation. This is a false allegation, but it occurs because those who make it don’t conceive of another reason for the death of Christ other than the false legal reason. Thus, when we take that reason away, they conclude we teach that the death of Christ was unnecessary.

Here is 1Corinthians 7:18-20 from *The Remedy*:

If a man was a circumcised Jew when he accepted the Remedy to sin and was called to be a member of God's treatment team, he should not deny who he is and try to become uncircumcised. If a man was an uncircumcised Gentile when he accepted the Remedy to sin and was called to be a member of God's treatment team, he should not deny who he is and become circumcised.¹⁹Nationality means nothing! What matters is whether one has partaken of the Remedy to selfishness and sin, has God's law of love written on the heart, and lives in harmony with God and his methods.²⁰God needs members of his treatment team in all walks of life, so minister the truth about God, and his Remedy to sin, in whatever station you are.

do you find this acceptable, reasonable, truthful, or offensive?

Do you think the Jews in Paul’s day would have found this acceptable or offensive?

What about Christians that you know who don’t currently agree with our class—do you think they would agree with this or find it offensive?



If a person found offensive what might that indicate?

Read the fourth and fifth paragraphs, “Paul was advised to be politically correct...”

Was this a good idea? Why or why not?

Was Paul’s *intention* to seek peace and reconciliation and to not offend others a good goal?

If his intention to not offend and seek peace was good, why was the action not good?

What about in society today—where do we draw the line between not offending others, being peacemakers, and compromising in such a way that we actually undermine truth and contribute to destruction?

In order to know what decision to make would it be important to understand what matters and what doesn’t matter?

For instance, if a person believes they must wear a certain hat or hairpiece in order to be right with God—would it be necessary for you to argue with them about any value in their headdress? No, because headdress doesn’t matter at all.

What kinds of things actually matter and what do not matter?

Any examples of taking stands that you know will offend, versus compromising so people won’t be offended?

MONDAY

Read second paragraph, “A riot ensued...” Why did a riot ensue? What was the basis of the riot?

What methods did those who incited the riot use?

What does it say about those who would use such methods, even if something they believe to be sacred is profaned?

Do you remember years ago some artist put a cross in urine?

How did the Christians respond? They responded by being disgusted with the display—but they left the person free to do so.

What would happen if someone did that with a Koran? Why?

What does it say about those who would riot when something they value is profaned?



It reveals their characters, which reveals their beliefs and the type of god they worship—it is evidence they are not worshipping the true God. Why?

Because of the law of worship—by beholding we become changed. We actually become like the God we worship and admire. If we would use violence to injure, coerce, punish, inflict harm, kill those who offend us, we are not like Jesus who turned the other cheek and told us to love our enemies.

It is evidence that such people do not understand design law and operate on the false legal lie that God's law functions like human law. In their minds, they see such actions as crimes and crimes must be punished, thus it is right and just in their minds to stone or kill those who violate their religious laws.

However, when we grow up into the reality of God's kingdom, we realize that those who reject God, who prefer profanity to holiness, who prefer selfishness to love, lies to truth, vileness to purity are changed by their preferences. Their hearts are hardened, characters warped and they take themselves out of harmony with God and life itself and their end is ruin and death—thus we don't have to inflict punishment on them any more than we do the person who smokes two packs per day. Their destruction is unavoidable.

Do we see that a person's beliefs, biases, prejudices, pre-conceived ideas of right and wrong set that person up to react in certain ways?

Can we predict the reactions of people if we know their biases and beliefs?

TUESDAY

The lesson focuses our attention on Paul's address to the crowd, let's read that address, hear what Paul said to this mob, and then answer the question—what outraged them so about what Paul said:

"My fellow Jews, let me answer the charges brought against me."

²When they heard him speaking in Aramaic, they became silent and listened. Paul said,³"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but I grew up here in Jerusalem. I was one of Gamaliel's students, and received a doctorate in theology with special emphasis on the Law of Moses, and have been just as devoted to God as anyone here today.⁴I was ruthless in my attack against those who followed this way of salvation, willing to kill if needed. I arrested anyone who I thought was associated with this movement, men or women, and threw them in prison⁵(as the high priest or anyone of the High Court can confirm). I even got written authorization to take to the Jewish authorities in Damascus, and went there intent on arresting these people and bringing them back to Jerusalem to be punished.



⁶"As I approached Damascus, around noon, a blazing light from heaven shone all around me.⁷ As I fell to the ground, I heard a voice say to me, "Saul! Saul! Why are you attacking me?"

⁸I asked, "Who are you, Lord?" "The voice replied, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are warring against.'⁹ My traveling companions saw the light, but they didn't understand what the voice said to me.

¹⁰"What do you want from me, Lord?" I asked." The Lord said, "Stand up and go on to Damascus. There, you will be told the assignment I have for you."¹¹ But when I got up, I was blind, so instead of marching into Damascus, my friends led me, holding my hand.

¹²"Once there, Ananias came to see me. He is a devoted man of God, faithful in his observation of all the instructions given through Moses, and highly respected by the Jews living there.¹³ Standing next to me, he said, 'Brother Saul, see again!' And immediately I was able to see him.

¹⁴"Then he said, 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to understand his purpose, methods and principles, and to see the Perfect One and hear him speak.'¹⁵ You will be his ambassador to all people, testifying to what you have seen and heard.'¹⁶ So don't just sit there; get up and begin your new life of love, and be immersed in water to symbolize the washing away of selfishness and partaking of the Remedy—his perfect character of love.'

¹⁷"After returning to Jerusalem, I was talking with God at the temple when I was taken away in a vision¹⁸ and saw the Lord speak to me. He said, 'Get up now and leave Jerusalem. Don't delay, for they will not believe your testimony about me.'

¹⁹"I said to the Lord, 'But Lord, these men will take me seriously because they know I went from synagogue to synagogue imprisoning and beating anyone who believed in you.'²⁰ And when your martyr Stephen was killed, I stood there approving, and watching over the coats of those who murdered him.'

²¹"But the Lord simply said to me, 'Leave this place. I am sending you far away to take the Remedy to the non-Jewish people of the world.' "

²²The crowd was listening up to this point, but when they heard about God sending Paul with the Remedy to non-Jews, they became enraged and began shouting, "Kill him! Wipe him from the face of the earth! He doesn't deserve to live!"

What upset the Jews so much? That he was saying that God loves the Gentiles were included in the plan of salvation—the promises to Abraham.

Why was this upsetting to them?



What is it evidence of?

How could this have happened to a group of people who had been blessed with the Bible and God's prophets?

Have such things happen in Christianity?

Are such things going on in Christianity today?

What is the underlying problem that causes such attitudes?

WEDNESDAY

The lesson focuses our attention on Paul before the Sanhedrin, which was the Jewish high court. Let's read Acts 23:1-5:

Paul, looking directly at the leaders of the Jewish High Court, said, "My fellow Israelites, all I have done I have done to honor God and have fulfilled my duties to him with a clear conscience."² Upon hearing this, the high priest Ananias ordered his aides to strike Paul on the mouth.³ Paul blurted out, "I hope God strikes you down, you white-washed impediment to truth! You sit there pretending to follow the law in judgment of me, yet you command I be struck—in violation of the law!"

⁴Those standing near Paul gasped: "How dare you insult God's high priest like that!"

⁵Paul humbly said, "I'm sorry, brothers. I didn't know he was the high priest; for the Scripture says: 'Don't speak badly about the ruler of your people.'" *The Remedy*

What do you learn from this interaction?

What was Paul quick to point out? The lawlessness of those who claim to be law-keepers.

Do we see this in the history of Christianity—the violence and law-breaking of those who claim to be representatives of Christ?

Do we see that those who hold to the false law view always end up breaking God's design laws? Those who hold to the imposed law will always end up violating the law of love and liberty, coercing the conscience of others.

What about what came to light a couple of weeks ago in Pennsylvania—over 300 priests molesting more than 1000 children over 70 years, while the church institution worked to cover it up?

How could this happen?



I am not bringing this up to cast stones at another organization—but because it serves as an object lesson to discern the problems when we replace God’s design law with human imposed law.

So, how could this happen?

- Since Adam’s sin selfishness exists in the hearts of human beings and we are vulnerable to temptation and the exploitation of others if not for the grace of God.
- This organization rejected God’s design for human relationships and instituted its own, imposed, arbitrary rules on human relations—i.e. that priests must not be married.
- This, causes a selection bias. What is a selection bias? It is when we use some filter that eliminates some people from the potential pool of candidates and increases the concentration of others. For instance, if we say only men can be priests, we just eliminated all women and increased to 100% the concentration of men. In the case of the Catholic Church, their arbitrary rule on celibacy has reduced the likelihood of healthy heterosexual men becoming priests. Young college age men, as they consider career choices, when normal biological sexual desire is high are less likely to choose the priesthood if they cannot marry.
- However, people with sexual struggles and who also love God might be drawn to a career which purports to serve God thinking that if they dedicate their lives to God He will deliver them from their unhealthy desires. Thus, the arbitrary rule of celibacy for the priesthood, sets up a selection bias increasing the number of pedophiles likely to be found there.
- When instances of abuse do occur, does the institution examine itself and change or sacrifice innocents with coverups?

Returning to God’s design law in how we operate protects and heals and reduces the selection biases and puts the healing of people first.

THURSDAY

The Jews in Caesarea plotted to kill Paul, and the lesson asks, “What does this teach us about how passionate people can be for causes that are wrong?”

Can you think of any causes today in which people are passionately wrong?

And if we do identify people, perhaps family or friends that are passionately wrong, are they typically easy to reason with? Or does their passion shut down thinking and they become closed to truth?

- How can we tell whether a cause is right or wrong?
- Do the methods employed indicate anything about the cause, or at least the motives of those promoting the cause?
- What method did Peter use when the soldiers came to arrest Christ?
- Was Peter promoting the same cause as Jesus?
- If so, why did Jesus say to Peter shortly before, “get behind me Satan?”



- What cause was Peter promoting and what cause was Jesus promoting?
- Did it appear they were promoting the same cause?
- Why did Peter come down on the wrong side in what he was doing?
- Could Christians today be vulnerable to promoting the wrong cause under the banner of Jesus?
- What do we believe Revelation tells us will happen before Christ returns?
- Will people, who claim to believe in Jesus, actually be working against Jesus?
- How can we tell those who are for Jesus from those who are against Jesus?
- Can we tell by the day upon which they attend church? Or how they take communion, or how they are baptized?
- How can we tell?

‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’ Mt 25:40

Remember Rwanda—what differentiated those who participated in the genocide from those who protected others—it wasn’t denomination, method of baptism, day of worship—it was whether they worshipped an authoritarian or benevolent God.

Those with the legal/penal view of God who must inflict punishment participated in the genocide, those with a God of love protected others.

It always comes back to the God we worship, and our view of God is impacted by the type of law we believe His government is based upon.

FRIDAY

Read third paragraph, “Had the leaders...” What does this say about how God works? What method does God employ?

Read the fourth paragraph—“The same spirit...”

Do we struggle with these problems today?

What would you suggest we could do to overcome this problem?

read and discuss questions



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Check our website for new chapters of *The Remedy* the Psalms as they are slowly added. When an entire book of the Old Testament is complete then it will be added to the app and when you update the app you will get the new book. Thank you for your prayers and support as I work on this project.

Watch *The Dr. Tim Jennings Show* on WBTN.TV Network. Go to TimJenningsMD.com for more info.

New Video Blogs—If you don't follow us on Facebook, then be sure to visit our website we are posting new blogs again, the go up every Thursday.

September 14, 15, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be Keynote Speaker at Crossroads Community Church in Georgetown, Delaware.

September 27-29, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Mega National Conference of the American Association of Christian Counselors in Dallas, TX

September 30-Oct 2, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at NAD of SDA Mental Health Education retreat for pastors at Kettering, OH.

October 19, 20, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be doing a seminar at Camelback SDA church, in Phoenix, AZ.

November 9,10 2018: Dr. Jennings will be doing two presentations at Houston, TX, in conjunction with the AACC

December 1, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be doing an Aging Brain seminar in Dallas, TX. Organized by the Arlington SDA church.

January 4-6, 2019: Dr. Jennings will be speaking for the Florida Conference of SDA Women's Convention in Orlando, FL.

February 2-3, 2019: Dr. Jennings will be speaking Christ's Church of Oronogo, MO.

In partnership with Come and Reason Ministries and Hixson United Methodist Church
Mental Health Matters Community Gatherings for Help, Hope and Healing

Fix for Failing Families Thursday, September 13, 2018

Families are under attack, more than 50% of marriages end in divorce, in the U.S. almost 900,000 children are victims of abuse each year, and 77% of childhood deaths are caused by one or both parents. Discover principles and practice to bring healing to your family.

The Science of Belief Thursday, October 12, 2018

In this seminar we will examine the science of belief and demonstrate how modern quantum understanding provides a scientific basis for the impact belief, including prayer, has on our physical health and can even impact the physical world around us.

Guilt Resolution Thursday, November 8, 2018

Do you struggle with guilt? Discover the difference between legitimate and illegitimate guilt and how to resolve each and how to prevent people from manipulating you with guilt.

The God-Shaped Brain Thursday, December 13, 2018

Our brains are in a constant state of flux. Moment by moment new connections are forming, idle tracks are being pruned back and brain circuits are changing. Discover how our beliefs change our brain wiring, our physical health, and even which genes are turned on or turned off. Do your beliefs matter – more than you ever knew!