



## 2020 1Q Daniel: Lesson 7 From the Lion's Den to the Angel's Den

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

### SABBATH

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Read first paragraph, “After the Medo-Persians...” Isn’t this quite remarkable? It really says something about Daniel that the conquering kingdom also put him in a leadership role.

Read second paragraph, “However, as the chapter unfolds...” What is being described with the sentence, “And we can be sure that to a great degree, his faithfulness to God directly impacts his faithfulness in these other areas, as well.”

This is the law of worship—by beholding we become changed. Worshipping the God of truth, love, freedom caused Daniel to grow to be more like God, to practice more of God’s principles as they were assimilated into his character. Thus, Daniel practiced the same principles of honesty, integrity, faithfulness in all his activities, not just in his religion.

This is one of the problems with the imperial version of Christianity in which people have accepted the lie that God’s law works like human law and justice requires forcing people to comply and punishing rule-breakers. This leads to Christians who practice the enemy’s methods in the name of Jesus—in the Dark Ages burning people at the stake, the Salem witch trials, Galileo being imprisoned, slavery, Nazi Germany, Rwanda; and what about here in the US, are there those who, in the name of Christ, would be willing to take the freedoms of others?

Does that mean then that Christianity is wrong and we should oppose Christianity? No—it means the world needs to know the truth about the God of love whose laws are design laws—the 3 Angels’ Messages!

Does it mean society is better off with a humanistic and godless worldview? No, it means the world needs to know the truth about the God of love!

Read the last paragraph, “Daniel’s experience with persecution...” What comes to mind when you think of potential persecution?

Does 1Corinthians 10:13 come to mind?

“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.” (NKJV)

Have you ever had this promise fulfilled in your life?



But what about this promise for Stephen or for Paul? Was it fulfilled for them?

Consider Matthew 10:28 “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.” (NIV84)

What does this mean?

People can hurt us physically, emotionally, psychologically—but they cannot damage our souls—our souls only get damaged by us when we choose to give in to temptation, to believe the lies, to reject truth, to harden our hearts.

## SUNDAY

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Read first paragraph, “Even in heaven...” In heaven, what method of leadership did Lucifer come to think was the right way to rule?

For you have said in your heart:

I will ascend into heaven,  
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;  
I will also sit on the omount of the congregation  
On the farthest sides of the north;  
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,  
I will be like the Most High.’ (Is 14:13,14 NKJV)

What method is this? To rise above and rule over.

But what is God’s methods of rulership as revealed by Jesus?

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,  
but made himself nothing,  
taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.  
And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to death—  
even death on a cross! Philippians 2:5-8 NIV84)

What method does Satan apply to governance? Imperialism, imposed law, rules over, and force—the masses must serve him.



What method does God apply to governance? Love, giving, beneficence, God gives of Himself to uplift and bless His creatures.

Thus, one of the founders of the SDA church wrote:

But turning from all lesser representations, **we behold God in Jesus**. Looking unto Jesus we see that **it is the glory of our God to give**. "I do nothing of Myself," said Christ; "the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father." "I seek not Mine own glory," but the glory of Him that sent Me. John 8:28; 6:57; 8:50; 7:18. In these words is set forth **the great principle which is the law of life for the universe**. All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, **in His ministry for all created beings**: through the beloved Son, **the Father's life flows out to all**; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus through Christ the **circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life**. {DA 21.2}

What method of governance does God use? Truth, love, freedom—which means God gives for our good, He does not take from us for His good. He only accepts the service of love:

Historic Adventism taught this:

**Even when he was cast out of heaven, Infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan. Since only the service of love can be acceptable to God, [why? Because God is love and God does not take from us for His good. God gives to us for our good. To take from us without our free giving to Him would cause resentment in us, incite fear, destroy love. God wants our health, happiness, wellbeing and will not accept that which destroys His creation. Thus He only accepts the service of love.]** the allegiance of His creatures must rest upon a conviction of His justice and benevolence. **The inhabitants of heaven and of the worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the nature or consequences of sin, could not then have seen the justice of God in the destruction of Satan.** [What was just described? Did the writer say in God using power to destroy Satan who would have otherwise lived eternally in sin? No! In the destruction of Satan—the unanswered question in the paragraph, and what angels didn't know, and sadly many Christians don't understand is from where destruction comes. What law lens do you use to understand this? Destruction comes from sin, from choosing to put oneself out of harmony with the laws upon which life is built. To sever one's connection with the source of life.] **Had he been immediately blotted out of existence, some would have served God from fear rather than from love.** The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. [From where is God working to destroy sin and eradicate it? From the hearts and minds of His intelligent beings, not from historical record books!] **For the good of the entire universe through ceaseless ages, he must more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings, and that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might be forever placed beyond all question.** PP 42.3 [How many have asked why Satan wasn't destroyed when he rebelled—here is why—because



sin happens in minds. Lies believed break the circle of love and trust and broken love and trust results in fear and selfishness—thus God doesn't want to destroy Satan, God wants to destroy sin and this can only be done by exposing the truth in order to destroy the lies which had broken the circle of love and trust. This takes time for beings to be fully persuaded in their own minds. Just see what is happening in the world and news cycles right now.]

Paul seeks to impress upon our minds the fact that **the foundation of all acceptable service to God, as well as the very crown of the Christian graces, is love; and that only in the soul where love reigns will the peace of God abide.** Sanctified Life 87.2

**The law of love is the foundation of God's government, and the service of love the only service acceptable to Heaven. God has granted freedom of will to all,** endowed men with capacity to appreciate His character, and therefore with ability to love Him and to choose His service. So long as created beings worshiped God they were in harmony throughout the universe. While love to God was supreme, love to others abounded. As there was no transgression of the law, which is the transcript of God's character, no note of discord jarred the celestial harmonies. TMK 366.2

So God governs upon truth, love, freedom, gives to us doesn't take from us, but accepts the service of love—why? Because when we give in love we are not actually providing God something God needs, but we are exercising our God-given capacity to love and thus we grow in love and develop our godly attributes solidifying ourselves in love. God accepts that which is good for His creation, and that is always harmony with Him, His design law and principles.

But Satan's government works on power over, with a ruling elite exploiting and dominating the masses. Throughout all human history the governments of the world have been this way—a few ruling elites, aristocrats, exploiting and dominating the masses and demanding fealty, taxes, service for the benefit of the elite at the expense of the masses. Pharaoh's, Emperors of Japan, China, the kings/emperors of Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome and the nation states of Europe. Only one government in history was established to give the power to the masses and prevent a ruling elite from arising and that government was the USA with its constitution. And the constitution with its protections of liberty has been under assault since its inception.

It is the most important legal document in the world that stands in the way of a one world government. And this is one of the reasons the US will lead the world in forming a one world government, ultimately speaking like a dragon in the end. Why? Because God's methods always heal, strengthen, build up and as the principles of liberty were practiced this nation became stronger and the constitution held back the elites from forming a one world government.

But that is changing, whether from right or left, the principles of constitution will be set aside in order to establish a ruling elite to dominate the masses and when that happens, the strength of the US will lead the world to form the one world coalition.



The principles under attack right now are:

- The right to bear arms
- Free speech
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of the press

The devil's methods are the methods of lies, fear and selfishness. What I see happening in the world is that fear is incited from both the right and left and that both extremes are dishonest in their portrayal of the other side. Dishonest in distorting facts and twisting evidences to cause their base to view the other side as an existential threat—a threat to the very existence of the nation and the world. Thus, because life and existence is being threatened, and the world is intoxicated with the wine of Babylon—meaning they believe God's law works like human law and it is right to punish law breakers, then it is right to use power to violate liberty to protect self, to protect what is right, to protect the nation, to protect the world and both sides are seeking the power of the state to force its way and destroy the other side.

This is because both sides are driven by the principles of fear and selfishness and imperial law and most Christians accept the idea that God's law is like human law and will go along if the "right" laws can be passed.

If you have read my blogs over the last two weeks you have seen how some responses given evidence of this in their responses. They are so fearful and so filled with animus that they lose the ability for reasoned discourse and seek to silence voices they don't agree with—the freedom of speech under attack.

It seems very much like the Jewish leaders methods when Peter was preaching Jesus after Pentecost. Use the power of the state and intimidation to silence voices you don't agree with, rather than let people speak and allow the truth to win the day.

The Christian however, who has Jesus in their heart doesn't live in fear. Doesn't need to seek the power of the state to advance the cause of Christ. The Christian presents the truth, in love, and leaves others free. It is okay with me if others see and practice things differently. Because over time the violations of design law will become evidenced.

When we live in harmony with God's design laws we cannot avoid the benefits that result. We do grow and get healthier and advance in wisdom and understanding. When we live in violations of God's design laws we cannot avoid the damaging consequences, our minds will get darkened and depraved just as Paul writes in Romans chapter 1.

What is the root of jealousy? It is a lack of love. When we love others, we are not jealous of their successes, but we celebrate them and rejoice in them. But when we love ourselves most we see other's successes as a threat to us and are jealous and envious.



## MONDAY

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The lesson asks us to read Daniel 6:6-9:

So the administrators and the satraps went as a group to the king and said: “O King Darius, live forever! <sup>7</sup>The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. <sup>8</sup> Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” <sup>9</sup> So King Darius put the decree in writing. (NIV84)

What do you think about this?

Why would Darius go along with this?

What was the motivation of those who sought to get this law passed?

What happens when selfishness rules in the heart?

Do we have this problem in the world today?

I saw a movie recently called *The Last Full Measure* which is the true story of Airman William H. Pitsenbarger, Jr., who was an air force medic during the Vietnam war. When an army platoon had their medic killed Pitsenbarger left his helicopter and saved a number of people but was killed in the process. In the aftermath he was nominated for the Congressional Medal of Honor but it was downgraded to the Airforce Cross. The movie documents the 30 year battle of the soldiers he saved working to get the medal upgraded to the MOH. In the movie, it depicted how various bureaucrats and politicians obstructed the process, not because it wasn’t merited, but for their own political reasons or career advancement, but eventually the MOH was awarded.

It was a powerful depiction not only of the heroism of this young man, the regard in which he was held by those he saved, the powerful bonds of brotherhood forged in combat, but also of the corruption in politics and the selfishness in which people will manipulate others for their own gain.

## TUESDAY

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Read second paragraph, “Of course...” Are there lessons in this story for us?

Do we believe what Daniel said in 2:21: that God “sets up kings and deposes them” applies to rulers of governments today?



What do you think of this quotation from one of the founders of the SDA church in the book *The Great Controversy*, do you believe it?

But so long as Jesus remains man's intercessor in the sanctuary above, **the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit is felt by rulers and people. It still controls to some extent the laws of the land. Were it not for these laws**, the condition of the world would be much worse than it now is. **While many of our rulers are active agents of Satan, God also has His agents among the leading men of the nation.** The enemy moves upon his servants to propose measures that would greatly impede the work of God; **but statesmen who fear the Lord are influenced by holy angels to oppose such propositions with unanswerable arguments.** Thus a few men will hold in check a powerful current of evil. The opposition of the enemies of truth will be restrained that the third angel's message may do its work. **When the final warning shall be given, it will arrest the attention of these leading men through whom the Lord is now working, and some of them will accept it, and will stand with the people of God through the time of trouble.** GC 610.3

What did you hear? Did you hear God's agents are godly people? Hmm...according to this author, those acting for God's cause, who are responding to God's influence are working to hold back the policies and practices that would undermine the laws that restrain evil, i.e. hold back the forces that would undermine our constitutional liberties.

But notice, these men, WHEN the final warning is given, will accept it—then and stand with the people of God. It sounds to me that these men that are referred to as God's agents value the principles of liberty, but are not necessarily converted to God at that time, but are converted later.

Does this sound like Nebuchadnezzar—a arrogant, prideful, pagan yet who was called by Jeremiah God's servant, but who wasn't converted to God until many years later?

I think it is dangerous for us to try and judge the hearts of people—especially people we don't personally know or have experience with, but only see through the lens of their public persona and the media.

What other lessons are there for us in this story of Daniel?

Daniel can also be an object lesson where he represents the people of God:

- He was a foreigner in a godless nation
  - We are foreigners in a godless world
- He was in Babylon and Persia but not of Babylon and Persia
  - We are in the world but not of the world
- He kept his eye fixed on God
  - We keep our eyes fixed on Christ
- He practiced God's principles and remained loyal to God's kingdom
  - We practice God's principles and remain loyal to God's kingdom





- He came under attack from the enemies of God
  - We come under attack from the enemies of God
- He turned to God in prayer, trusted God with the outcome and God closed the lion's mouth
  - We live in the time when the Bible says, Satan is a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. But for those who, like Daniel, turn to God, trust Him with the outcome, God closes the lion's mouth and we will be eternally delivered.
- Daniel's witness converts the king
  - Our witness will convert others—even some of the leading statesmen
- Daniel is rescued and the plotters of evil die by the lions
  - We will be rescued from sin and the wicked will die by the power of sin along with Satan in the end

Read the bottom green section, “Read Acts 5:27-32...” This is the account of Peter being told by the Sanhedrin not to preach Christ anymore and Peter saying he had to obey God and not man.

Is history filled with people like Peter who found themselves in the situation where they chose to obey God and not the laws of man—like Daniel, like the three worthies?

But is history also filled with people, who thought they were following God and thereby broke human law, but who were in actuality not following God?

Examples:

- All the terrorists and suicide bombers who acted in the name of their god?
- Pro-life advocates who have bombed abortion clinics or shot doctors who perform abortions?

How can we know whether our actions are in harmony with God and His kingdom or violating God's law?

Would it depend on our understanding of God and His kingdom?

Would our understanding of God's law have an impact in our ability to discern right from wrong?

What about those who look to others to tell them the answer? Recently I received an email that informed me of a conference president who received a copy of our Heavenly Sanctuary pamphlet, but instead of studying out the evidence for himself, he sent it off to a theology professor and asked the theology professor to tell him whether it was okay or not. The theology professor answered that he **did not do an extensive review**, and was only sharing his **preliminary** thoughts, but listed several doctrines he believed I taught incorrectly. The conference president took this as conclusive evidence and sent out an email warning his constituents that I teach error. But every point the professor made was in some way factually wrong.

What do we learn from this?





It is difficult to persuade people with truth, if those people don't actually know how to evaluate truth for themselves, or value truth, but instead have surrendered their thinking to some human authority to tell them the answers.

Why do people do this? Because they are operating upon imposed law—and at level four and below, one doesn't think for themselves, one looks to someone in authority to tell them the answer.

We see this all the time—rather than reasoned and evidenced-based explanations, we get authoritative claims:

- The pastor says...
- The *theological institute of right thinking* says...
- The Bible says—with a quoted text without understanding the meaning
- EGW says...

In other words people memorize the “right” answers but not why they are the right answers and are intolerant of any deviation from those rules.

It's like memorizing the answers to a math exam, but never learning how to do math.

## WEDNESDAY

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Read last paragraph, “The biblical text...” From last Friday's lesson we read:

The history of nations speaks to us today. To every nation and to every individual God has assigned a place in His great plan. Today men and nations are being tested by the plummet in the hand of Him who makes no mistake. All are by their own choice deciding their destiny, and God is overruling all for the accomplishment of His purposes. PK 536.2

How do we understand the balance between our freewill and God's sovereignty?

- Did God want Daniel to be betrayed?
- Did he want the hearts of the Persian leaders filled with jealousy and envy?
- Did God want them to throw Daniel to the lions?
- Did God foreknow it would happen?
- Did God intervene to protect Daniel?
- Did God choose for Daniel to maintain his prayer routine?
- Did God choose for Darius to trust Daniel?
- Would God have had the opportunity to reveal truth to Darius in the same profound way without Daniel and Daniel's choice to trust God?

Do we often struggle when in the middle of trials in our lives with the question of where God is? Can God have plans that reach beyond our awareness?



Do our actions and choices ever provide God opportunities to act that He wouldn't have if we didn't make the choices we do?

## THURSDAY

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Read second paragraph, "Yes, Daniel is miraculously..." Were the evildoers punished? By who and for what?

Were the evildoers punished by God? No, they were punished by Darius, for what? For being traitors to their king and trying to trick the king.

Is this how the evildoers at the end of time are punished?

What is the punishment for sin? Is it torture or is it eternal death? From where does the eternal death come?

Is the devil right when he says, "There isn't anything wrong with sin itself, there is only something wrong with God who will torture you and kill you for it. If we could just get God some anger management classes so God doesn't use His power to hurt us we could live forever in sin because sin doesn't harm, it is God who harms." Is this reality?

No! That is a lie! Sin harms, sin kills, breaking God's law destroys those who do it unless God heals them. Thus the Bible says:

- sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. James 1:15 NIV84
- The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction... Gal 6:8 NIV84

And based on these texts and others one of the founders of the SDA church wrote:

**We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself.** His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. **Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.** {1SM 235.2}

**The law is an expression of God's idea. When we receive it in Christ, it becomes our idea. It lifts us above** the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin. "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Ps. 119: 165)-- cause them to stumble. {1SM 235.3}

"We read of chains of darkness for the transgressor of God's law. We read of the worm that dieth not, and of the fire that is not quenched. Thus is **represented** [it is a representation of



something, of what?] the **experience** of every one who has permitted himself to be grafted into the stock of Satan, who has cherished sinful attributes. [What does the worm and fire represent? The **experience** of those who join with Satan in heart, mind, attitude and principles] When it is too late, **he will see** that sin is the transgression of God's law. **He will realize** that **because of transgression, his soul is cut off from God**, and that God's wrath abides on him. **This is a fire unquenchable, and by it every unrepentant sinner will be destroyed.** [What is the fire unquenchable? Sin and rebellion solidified in the character of the wicked!] Satan strives constantly to lead men into sin, and he who is willing to be led, who refuses to forsake his sins, and despises forgiveness and grace, will suffer the result of his course" (ST, April 14, 1898 par. 13). [the suffering is in the minds of people, it is represented as fire etc.]

This case [Pharaoh's] is placed on record for our benefit. Just what took place in Pharaoh's heart will take place in every soul that neglects to cherish the light and walk promptly in its rays. **God destroys no one. The sinner destroys himself by his own impenitence.** When a person once neglects to heed the invitations, reproofs, and warnings of the Spirit of God, **his conscience becomes seared**, and the next time he is admonished, it will be more difficult to yield obedience than before. And thus with every repetition. Conscience is the voice of God, heard amid the conflict of human passions; when it is resisted, the Spirit of God is grieved. – {5T 120.1}

We want all to understand how the soul is destroyed. **It is not that God sends out a decree that man shall not be saved.** He does not throw a darkness before the eyes which cannot be penetrated. But man at first resists a motion of the Spirit of God, and, having once resisted, it is less difficult to do so the second time, less the third, and far less the fourth. Then comes the harvest to be reaped from the seed of unbelief and resistance. Oh what a harvest of sinful indulgences is preparing for the sickle! – {5T 120.2}

What about the suffering that we experience from sin in this life, like sickness from addictions, or broken relationships from betrayal, or fear and guilt from exploitation—are these punishments? Or, are these painful consequences of sin mercies to alert us that something is wrong, to make us less satisfied with the course we are on, to give us opportunity to stop our sinful course, reflect, reevaluate and seek God?

Is there a punishment for sin? Absolutely, and what is that punishment? Ruin and death, and from where does that punishment come? From sin itself!

What do we make of the fact that the Persian king not only had the plotters thrown to the lions, but their wives and children also?



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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**Questions:** If you have questions please email them either at [requests@comeandreason.com](mailto:requests@comeandreason.com) or [topics@comeandreason.com](mailto:topics@comeandreason.com). If you post on Facebook it is likely they will not be answered as I often miss questions posted on Facebook.

**February 8, 2020:** Come and Reason Class will meet at Bake Crafters at 10673 S Lee Hwy, McDonald, TN 37353 for this Sabbath only. Class will start at our regular time.

**March 27,28, 2020:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at an AACC River Conference at Plano, TX. More info at <http://theriverconference.com/>

**April 17,18, 2020:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Lakewood SDA church in Lakewood OH.

**September 17-19 2020:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC National Conference in Dallas, TX

**October 3, 2020:** Come and Reason will have a one day seminar in Chattanooga TN on Healing the Mind, Recovering from Sexual Abuse, the Impact of Digital Media on Kids and more. Details coming soon.