



## 2021 4Q Present Truth in Deuteronomy Lesson 10 Remember, Do Not Forget

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

### SABBATH

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Read memory text: “Remember! Do not forget how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day that you departed from the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD” (Deuteronomy 9:7 NKJV).

What does this mean?

Does this mean the Lord has limited patience? That God is very much like us and can be provoked to act out if we pester Him enough, if we rebel enough, or are wicked enough?

Is the message that you better obey or else God will be provoked and use His power to strike you down?

If you do think this is the message why?

If you don't think this is the message why?

How can we know which way to understand this?

By knowing God and His law—if we know God and His law then we know what this means and how to understand it.

If one understands law as imposed rules that require imposed punishments—like humans make—then one reads this and concludes God is the source of inflicted pain, suffering and death for sin. God becomes the one from whom we must be protected and the solution for sin becomes legal. This is the root of all paganism, imposed laws with imposed punishments by deities that requiring sacrifice and offering be made to propitiate wrath, expiate sin, pay the legal penalty etc.

But, when we worship God as Creator and understand His laws are design laws, then we realize that love only exists in an atmosphere of freedom and God cannot be saying that He will use His power to inflict punishment for sin, for to do so would destroy love and incite more rebellion. This line of thinking, that sin requires punishment, is Satan's trick, Satan's deception, that causes some to pursue righteousness, to pursue being orderly, to pursue law-keeping, to pursue salvation through legal mechanism so they feel righteous while they spread the infection of sin, which at its root is selfishness and fear, rather than love and trust.



Through design law we understand that rebelliousness, violating God's law, hardens the heart. So we understand the passage to mean that these people rebelled to the point that they wouldn't listen to Moses, they wouldn't listen to God Himself, they wouldn't be humble even with the pillar of fire at night and the cloud during the day. So, because God is love, because God loves them and wants to prevent their eternal destruction, the reality of what sin was doing to mindset and heart attitude required that God withdraw His protection, to allow the scorpion and snake to come in and bite them in order for them to learn from reality what they refused to learn from instruction.

Consider this quotation out of *Patriarchs and Prophets*:

Moses faithfully set before the people their great sin. **It was God's power alone that had preserved them** in "that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water." Deuteronomy 8:15. Every day of their travels they had been kept by a **miracle of divine mercy**. In all the way of God's leading they had found water to refresh the thirsty, bread from heaven to satisfy their hunger, and peace and safety under the shadowy cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. Angels had ministered to them as they climbed the rocky heights or threaded the rugged paths of the wilderness. Notwithstanding the hardships they had endured, there was not a feeble one in all their ranks. Their feet had not swollen in their long journeys, neither had their clothes grown old. God had subdued before them the fierce beasts of prey and the venomous reptiles of the forest and the desert. **If with all these tokens of His love the people still continued to complain, the Lord would withdraw His protection until they should be led to appreciate His merciful care, and return to Him with repentance and humiliation.** PP 428.3 [Why did God withdraw? Did God get impatient? Did God get His feelings hurt—"Look you ungrateful people, I am spending time on you, resources and energy on you, if you can't at least give me a little appreciation, then forget you. I'll let you suffer!" Is that it? Or is there another reason? What is happening to their hearts, minds and characters while they practice rebellion, cherish selfishness, grumble, complain, and blame God? So, if God continues to protect them from reality and let THEIR fantasy that things are better in Egypt fuel their grumbling, what happens to them? They harden themselves and spread the rebelliousness into their children and grandchildren. So, God was forced by reality, how love and liberty work, to remove His protections and let them become educated on reality in order to wake them up—that their fantasy isn't how reality works. Only in harmony with God's design laws is their life and health. This is happening in the world right now, in the USA right now. Many have fantasies about how reality work and some of these fantasies have recently become public policy—and for those who see outcomes, consequences, results, we see the pain and suffering caused by the pursuit of fantasy. But others must implement their fantasy and suffer the painful results before they realize the truth. But others, just like ancient Israel, will refuse the truth despite the painful consequences and die in the misery of their own making.]

**Because they had been shielded by divine power they had not realized the countless dangers** by which they were continually surrounded. In their ingratitude and unbelief they had anticipated death, and now the Lord permitted death to come upon them. **The poisonous serpents that infested the wilderness** [Note that these serpents are the natural inhabitants of



the wilderness. These were not especially brought by God to inflict punishment, they had been especially restrained by God prior to this to prevent injury. This is an important point for some people read this story and teach that because of their rebellion God used divine power to bring snakes that would not otherwise have been there in order to inflict punishment, not so. God's power is used to heal and protect not torment and kill.] were called fiery serpents, on account of the terrible effects produced by their sting, it causing violent inflammation and speedy death. **As the protecting hand of God was removed** from Israel, great numbers of the people were attacked by these venomous creatures. PP 429.1

Now there was terror and confusion throughout the encampment. In almost every tent were the dying or the dead. None were secure. Often the silence of night was broken by piercing cries that told of fresh victims. All were busy in ministering to the sufferers, or with agonizing care endeavoring to protect those who were not yet stricken. **No murmuring now escaped their lips.** [Why? Were they all suddenly reborn into faith relationships with God and had new hearts of love and trust? No, mere awareness of reality, things with God were a lot better than the fantasy their complaints were stemming from.] When compared with the present suffering, their former difficulties and trials seemed unworthy of a thought. PP 429.2

**The people now humbled themselves before God.** They came to Moses with their confessions and entreaties. "We have sinned," they said, "for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee." [Is this repentance? No, this is still not repentance—it is confession and pleading or entreaties. What is it they are sorrowing over, the sin or the results of their sin? This is often the first step in repentance, but many stop here.] **Only a little before, they had accused him of being their worst enemy**, the cause of all their distress and afflictions. But even when the words were upon their lips, **they knew that the charge was false**; and as soon as real trouble came they fled to him as the only one who could intercede with God for them. "Pray unto the Lord," was their cry, "that He take away the serpents from us." PP 429.3 [Have we seen similar process being played out in the world today? I have, certain people being blamed for the cause of various problems, being accused as being the worst enemy, but those making the accusations know when they are making it that their accusations are lies—like the accusations against Nick Sandman or a certain leader colluding with Russia and many others. God permits people to reap their rebellion and all choices out of harmony with truth, out of harmony with design law, with reality, result in greater pain and suffering, which is designed by God to help people break out of the delusion in which their minds are trapped. But sadly, many double down on more lies. We see this happening right now in the world, so many decisions being made based on falsehood and the damage and injury is spreading.]

Moses was divinely commanded to make a **serpent of brass resembling the living ones**, and to elevate it among the people. [What does this represent? Jesus became a real human!] To this, all who had been bitten were to look, and they would find relief. He did so, and the joyful news was sounded throughout the encampment that all who had been bitten might look upon the brazen serpent and live. **Many had already died, and when Moses raised the serpent upon the pole, some would not believe that merely gazing upon that metallic image would heal them; these perished in their unbelief.** [Yes, some refuse to believe the truth no matter what.



Some would rather die that admit they were wrong, humble themselves and repent. We see this in society today also.] Yet there were many who had faith in the provision which God had made. Fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters were anxiously engaged in helping their suffering, dying friends to fix their languid eyes upon the serpent. If these, though faint and dying, could only once look, they were perfectly restored. PP 430.1

**The people well knew that there was no power in the serpent of brass to cause such a change in those who looked upon it. The healing virtue was from God alone.** [The people knew that the brass serpent did nothing for them, it was God healing them! Do we know that our healing comes from God? Do we know that we cannot heal ourselves from sin? Can we heal our nations from sin—violence, rebellion, prejudice and all the various problems? So, if a nation were to make changes that applied God’s methods what would be the result? And what would be required for a nation to do this? Wouldn’t it be that people in charge would have to themselves be godly, understand God’s design laws and methods?] In His wisdom He chose this way of displaying His power. By this simple means the people were made to realize that **this affliction had been brought upon them by their sins.** [What was the source of their affliction? Sin, not God!] **They were also assured that while obeying God they had no reason to fear, for He would preserve them.** PP 430.2 [What does this mean? If we don’t obey God do we have reason to fear? Yes we do—but we do not have reason to fear God while in disobedience, we have reason to fear sin. The problem with the imposed law view is that it causes people to fear God who is trying to save them more than sin which actually kills them. We never need to fear God (as in terror or be afraid, awe and reverence yes) but we should be afraid to lose our connection with God, which is what sin does to us.]

The lifting up of the brazen serpent was to teach Israel an important lesson. **They could not save themselves from the fatal effect of the poison in their wounds.** [This is a powerful object lesson. It wasn’t about a legal status, a broken rule, or being in legal trouble with God. They had an actual condition that without remedy would result in their death. Likewise, all human beings since Adam sinned are born with a sin-condition that we did not choose and that without remedy will result in our deaths. We cannot fix it, cure it, or save ourselves from the poison of fear and selfishness in our characters. The Remedy is Jesus Christ that we must receive through trust. And then, in trust we choose to do all that He leads us to do in our lives.] God alone was able to heal them. **Yet they were required to show their faith in the provision which He had made.** [Why did they have to show faith? Is faith of the sick person required to heal a physical wound? Do you remember the father whose son threw himself into a fire asking for his son to be healed—the father exercised faith and the boy was healed; we don’t have any record that the boy exercised faith. The point being, faith does not have to be exercised to heal a physical wound, God can heal physical wounds without our participation. But, not so with spiritual wounds; wounds of fear and selfishness and sinfulness in the heart, mind and character require our faith or trust to heal—why?. Without our willingness, our trust, our agreement, then our individuality would be erased if God were to act to eliminate the patterns of sinfulness in us. It is only by our willful and trusting cooperation with God that He is able to change the current of our thoughts, instill new motives and desires and lead us to choose new patterns of behavior that we are enabled to live out by receiving His power



strengthening us. So, this event is more than just physical healing, it is an object lesson for healing us from sin.] They must look in order to live. It was their faith that was acceptable with God, and by looking upon the serpent their faith was shown. **They knew that there was no virtue in the serpent itself, but it was a symbol of Christ;** and the necessity of faith in His merits was thus presented to their minds. [This is powerful, they knew a Savior was promised and salvation was not in themselves but in the coming Messiah! And what are His merits? His accomplishments, and what did He accomplish? The revelation of truth about God, the exposing of Satan as a liar, the demonstration that sin separates from God and results in death—that death is not inflicted by God, and the development of a perfect, mature, sinless human character that destroyed the infection of fear and selfishness, thus becoming the second Adam the new head of humanity restoring the species to unity with God.] **Heretofore many had brought their offerings to God, and had felt that in so doing they made ample atonement for their sins.** [Prior to this, they thought their sacrifices were paying the legal price for salvation. They viewed the object lessons through the wrong law and drew the wrong conclusion. The brass serpent experience demonstrated reality to them and is why the health message is the right arm of the gospel, because the health message operates upon design law.] They did not rely upon the Redeemer to come, of whom these offerings were only a type. **The Lord would now teach them that their sacrifices, in themselves, had no more power or virtue than the serpent of brass, but were, like that, to lead their minds to Christ, the great sin offering.** PP 430.3 [Why did Jesus have to die for our salvation? Was it to teach us of God's love? Why would death be necessary to teach us God loves us? Does a parent have to die to teach their children that God is love? Then why would Jesus have to die to teach us of God's love? There is only one situation in which that is true—a situation in which the children are under an actual death threat and the parent's intervention and death would save the child. If a parent saw their child in real danger, drowning, but refused to jump into the water and save the child would reveal the lack of love for the child, or at least a greater love for themselves. Or, the Titanic is sinking and a parent takes a seat on the lifeboat while their child is left to drown—that would demonstrate the opposite of love. But if the parent gave the child the seat, that would demonstrate love. So, the only place death demonstrates love is if without the action the other person would die. So, why would humans die if Christ didn't come as our substitute and Savior? It goes back to the law, to reality. Just as this object lesson of the brass serpent is teaching. They had real poison in them and we have real sinfulness, fear and selfishness in us that is contrary to how life is built to operate. Without intervention this condition results in ruin and death. Thus, if we are to live, then someone has to eradicate the infection and restore the life-giving principle into humanity. There were no humans, after Adam sinned, that could do this. So Jesus came as the second Adam and through His mother partook of the terminal condition but through the Holy Spirit, His Father, He shared His sinless immortal self. And then as a human He was tempted in all ways like us; He was tempted to act out of fear and to be selfish, to violate the law of love, the protocols of life. But instead, Jesus lived out the law of life perfectly as a human and at the cross He eradicated the infection and restored God's law back into the humanity He assumed. Thus we look to Jesus in faith, in trust and we receive by faith a new heart and right spirit, we have new longings, desires, motives and we choose to say yes to Jesus and it is no longer our fearful selfish selves that live, but Jesus lives in us.]





“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,” even so was the Son of man “lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” John 3:14, 15. **All who have ever lived upon the earth have felt the deadly sting** of “that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan.” Revelation 12:9. **The fatal effects of sin can be removed only by the provision that God has made.** [It is only through the victory of Jesus that we can be healed from sin, that our spirit temples can be cleansed and we be restored to at-one-ment with God!] The Israelites saved their lives by looking upon the uplifted serpent. That look implied faith. **They lived because they believed God's word, and trusted in the means provided for their recovery. So the sinner may look to Christ, and live.** He receives pardon through faith in the atoning sacrifice. Unlike the inert and lifeless symbol, **Christ has power and virtue in Himself to heal the repenting sinner.** PP 431.1

Let's read Paul's description of how Jesus brings peace and unity in Ephesians 2:14-17:

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. [The two one, referring to Jews and non-Jews. In other words, unifying people into one body. How, by destroying the dividing wall of hostility—what is the dividing wall of hostility? What caused Cain to kill Abel? What causes all hostility, division, violence, conflict? Sin, fear and selfishness, the carnal nature—thus Jesus came to destroy sin that exists in the heart of sinful humans. Sin is the dividing wall. What about abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations? What is the purpose of the added law, the 10 Commandments and other ordinances? They were ADDED as a diagnostic instrument to expose sin, and they are no longer necessary when sin has been eliminated. Are MRIs needed when there is no disease? So Jesus destroys the need for the written law which exposes sin, by destroying sin in the heart. Why did He do this? Next verse] His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. [One new man? Yes, the second Adam, a new human being that is free from sin, free from fear and selfishness, free from the carnal drives. In Jesus the carnal nature was eliminated and God's perfect character of love was established. He did this by combining His sinless immortal life with our sinful mortal life and purging the infection of fear and selfishness; you could say He killed the carnal nature and rose again on the third day as a human being purified from the infection and with God's law perfectly restored within. Thus, through Jesus we may partake of the DIVINE nature and be part of a new humanity, cleansed and renewed—all who do are reconciled or at-one with God through the cross.] (Ephesians 2:14-17 NIV84)

Read the second paragraph, “God often tells...” Here we are reminded to remember, but in other places we are told to forget and that God forgets or will not remember our sins anymore.

When the Bible says that God will not remember our sins, does that mean memory erasure, amnesia, or something else? What does it mean?



It means that when the sin has been removed from the heart, mind and character it is no longer an obstacle to the relationship and doesn't need to be thought of anymore. It can be forgotten from the relationship—no intervention needs to be applied, no treatment, no therapy, no discipline, no monitoring, etc. We don't need to think of the days of pain and heartache that sin caused, we can now live out our love for God and others and God celebrates with us. We no longer need to experience the guilt, shame, fear, loneliness, isolation that sin brings but those days can be forgotten as a way of living—not as a fact of history.

So, the point about God not remembering is not about forgetting the facts of history, it is about not having the problem in the relationship any longer.

Would our remembering be the same? In other words, when God tells us to remember is it primarily about remembering facts of history, or is it about relational remembering, remember in a way that builds and strengthens our bonds of love and appreciation for God? It is remembering in a way that makes us more loyal, faithful and godlike, so that we become more humble, kind, generous and loving.

But there is a way to remember that works just the opposite—did the Jews who crucified Christ remember:

- That they were descended from Abraham?
- That God made promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?
- The weekly Sabbath?
- The annual festivals?
- That God delivered them from Egypt?
- That God chose David to be king?
- That God promised David would have a son whose kingdom would never end?

Did the Jews who crucified Christ forget all these things? No, then what happened?

They forgot the true meaning of them. They remembered the historical facts but interpreted the facts through the wrong law lens and ultimately drew the completely wrong conclusions about God, their purpose as a nation, and the coming Messiah.

What about Christians today, can we fall into the same trap, remembering historical facts, various doctrinal truths, but do so through the wrong law lens so that we misinterpret the meaning to such a degree that we actually become God's enemies?

Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in **your name**, and in **your name** drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, '**I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!**'

“Therefore everyone who **hears these words of mine and puts them into practice** is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the



rock. 26 But everyone who **hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice** is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” (Mt 7:22–27 NIV84).

My blog this week is entitled [Building on the Rock](#) and I explore this parable, how we don't have a choice to avoid the storms of life—no matter where we build, we will experience storms. Our choice is where we build. We either build upon Jesus, His kingdom, putting into practice His design laws and methods, trusting in Him and then He dwells within us building us up in godly character, OR we build on the principles and methods of this world.

Only those who build upon Jesus, putting into practice the truths, principles, methods and design laws that Jesus revealed will stand when the storms come.

## SUNDAY

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The lesson focuses our attention upon the rainbow, which was to help us remember God's promise to never destroy the world with a flood again.

Has the world forgotten this? Has the rainbow come to represent something other than God's grace and plan of salvation?

And having forgotten that the world was destroyed by a flood, has this allowed for other false beliefs to enter into the hearts and minds of people that are part of what is corrupting the world today?

The apostle Peter wrote about the future of planet Earth:

First of all, you must understand that in the last days **scoffers will come**, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.” But **they deliberately forget** that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. **By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed** (2 Peter 3:3–6 NIV84).

Do we have scoffers today who mock the idea of Creation, who scoff at the idea of a worldwide flood and Noah's ark?

And these people who deny evidence, facts, and truth, who cling to a false worldview, they are the very ones who are leading our scientific institutions, our national and international policies. They are leading the Green movement. These people who deny Bible truth are leading the governments of the world in the COVID response. Why is it that church leaders defers to these deniers of reality?





If persons reject God and refuse to accept the truth, then who do you think is leading and inspiring them? It is Satan—the Green movement is not a godly movement, and we need to realize this and reject it. Peter continues:

By the same word the **present heavens and earth are reserved for fire**, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; **the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed** in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and **speed its coming**. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking **forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness** (vv. 7–13 NIV84).

What is the future of planet Earth from a Biblical understanding? Understand reality: This planet as we know it, is going to be destroyed and replaced with a new perfect planet free from all defects.

Before God returns and recreates it anew, things are going to get worse—and we cannot stop it. Satan is going to use the worsening conditions on the planet to incite fear—fear of climate change, of rising oceans, of terrible storms, of famine, of pandemics—and Satan will cause these calamities to increase. This will cause those who have rejected God to become more fearful and seek to save themselves by taking greater coercive control, passing more laws, taking away more freedoms, and ultimately seeking to cull the population in order to try to save the planet.

If you are a Christian and you are supporting the Green movement, you are supporting the enemy of God; you are empowering those who value the planet more than the people on the planet—and whose policies are designed to cull the population in order to save the planet. But as children of God, we love people more than the planet; we want as many people as possible to come to salvation, which means we don't want to cull the population; no—we want to bring people to Jesus!

Rejecting the Green movement does not mean that we fail to be good stewards of the Earth. In the very same way we govern ourselves, we will practice God's methods and not pollute, not abuse animals, not exploit the environment—but we will also not give our support to a godless movement that values the planet more than the people, a movement that will initiate policies that will result in injuring billions in the name of saving the planet. And we are seeing this happen right now all over the world!



## MONDAY

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The lesson asks us to read Deuteronomy 4:32-39:

“Ask now about the former days, long before your time, from the day God created **man on the earth; ask from one end of the heavens to the other**. Has anything so great as this ever happened, or has anything like it ever been heard of? [First point—ask, has any other god created life, created humankind? No! Only the true God. But notice the instruction is to ask **from one end of the heavens to the other**—here in the Old Testament we see that the conflict isn’t restricted to the earth. There was a conflict in the heavens, ask throughout the heavens to know, is there any other god who creates life and created humankind in His image on the earth. Angels in heaven, Lucifer and Christ are not the same. Lucifer is a created being and has no power to create. Jesus is God, an infinite being with no beginning and is the Creator.] Has any other people heard the voice of God speaking out of fire, as you have, and lived? [And this Creator God cares about you and speaks to you directly, personally, He doesn’t stay afar off and unreachable, but comes down to where you are and talks to you directly. And will eventually give up divine abilities to become one of us in order to save us.] Has any god ever tried to take for himself one nation out of another nation, by testings, by miraculous signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, or by great and awesome deeds, like all the things the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?

You were shown these things so that you might know that the LORD is God; besides him there is no other. [God doesn’t just declare truth, God reveals truth. God revealed truth throughout the heavens when He created the earth and humans upon it. God revealed truth to you directly by the demonstration of power over the elements of creation, by exposing the gods of Egypt as false, by overturning the power of the most powerful nation in the world. God did all of this to give you evidence that He is real and not some fantasy made up by imagination.] From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you. [He spoke to you and disciplines you because He loves you and wants to heal you.] On earth he showed you his great fire, and you heard his words from out of the fire. Because he loved your forefathers and chose their descendants after them, he brought you out of Egypt by his Presence and his great strength, to drive out before you nations greater and stronger than you and to bring you into their land to give it to you for your inheritance, as it is today. [Didn’t He love other people or only their forefathers? So what does this mean? He was able to have His love act, flow, move, work through their forefathers thus He loved them functionally because they trusted Him. And when God’s love is functional, operational, in the being it heals and transforms and God is able to will and do according to His good pleasure, and in this case to bring about the people who will be the avenue for the Messiah to save the entire world.]

Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other.” (Dt 4:32–39 NIV84).

Do we still need to remember this today? Do we see how hard God’s enemy works to get people to forget this?



## WEDNESDAY

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The lesson focuses our attention on the dangers of prosperity—what are the dangers?

Is there a blessing in the struggles of life, what are the blessings of the struggles?

What does this mean?

“Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope” (Ro 5:3–4 NIV84).

Does it mean that if we have no struggles, trials, sufferings that we have no hope?

Could there be danger in what the world thinks is success?

Do we help people by alleviating their suffering—does the cause of their suffering matter?

What if the suffering is a result of failure to apply oneself, or to choose avail oneself of the opportunities available?

Is it ever godly and loving to take an action that causes someone to suffer?

Why are government programs that are designed to relieve suffering often the cause of more suffering?

What is the difference between a government program and the Bible principle of helping those in need?

When Ruth and Naomi were in poverty and had no money for food what was God’s method to provide for their food? Gleaning in the field, what is the principle taught in this story?

- that people were required to do as much for their own health and welfare and sustenance as they were capable of doing—that they were not required to do more than they were capable, but it would be wrong to make others do for them what they were able to do for themselves why?
  - because it would atrophy the abilities of the one not utilizing them
  - it would diminish the character of the one not living up to their abilities
  - strength comes through exertion
  - our dignity and self-worth is a result of living out the principles of God to the best of our ability, failure to engage ourselves results in loss of our sense of worth and value. We will rightly feel guilt and shame and this is corrosive to the soul.
- But what if a person is capable and won’t do for themselves?
  - For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.” We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are



busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. (2 Th 3:10–12 NIV84).

Is this cruel or loving to treat people as this passage instructs?

But they might go hungry, they might cry out in despair—they might complain of how unloving you are for not giving them food, they might complain that it is because of their race, or gender that they are not given a universal monthly income.

But what happens to people when they don't work and are capable of doing so?

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Ga 6:7–10).

What is required for a person to do real good for another? That they know design law, know God's design for life and health and choose to operate in harmony with those designs. Good intentions are not enough to do good. The road to hell is often paved with good intentions. To do real good people must know God and God's laws and then know the situation and what actions will be therapeutic.

So, the difference between government programs and the Bible method is that the Bible method calls us to love others directly. We don't substitute a nameless, faceless bureaucracy for human relationships, which means we must get to know them personally. We must want their eternal best interest, and then we use our influence to create opportunities for their actual development and advancement as people created in the image of God to recover the image of God, to think and to act. We do not take actions that would destroy their individuality, that would infantilize them, that would make them shadows of others and corrupt their characters. This is what many of the government programs do, they take from people who don't want to help and this builds resentment, it also relieves from people any sense of further responsibility to actually help their neighbor, then gives to people who haven't fulfilled their life responsibilities, who don't do all they can with the abilities they have thus causing further dependence and atrophy of abilities rather than development of abilities.

Remember all governments of this earth are Satan's and they all practice Satan's methods. So many people get duped into buying into the goal and ignoring the destructive methods of achieving the goal.



## THURSDAY

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The lesson asks us to read Ephesians 2:8-13:

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (that done in the body by the hands of men)—remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ” (Eph 2:8–13 NIV84).

What does this mean?

What is God’s grace—God being gracious? God doing something that we don’t earn, something that isn’t pay or salary or the result of our effort?

So our salvation is a work of God for us—why was this needed? Why couldn’t we do it for ourselves?

What does it mean created in Christ Jesus—how are we created in Christ Jesus?

Jesus became the second Adam, the second head of humanity and in the humanity, the individual human being of Jesus, God saved/healed the species. God did something in the specific person of Jesus that overcame the damage that Adam did to the species. In Jesus God restored His living law of love and purged the infection of fear and selfishness and if we receive from Jesus what He accomplished we will be healed, restored, to do good works as an produce a fruit of His work.





## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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**DECEMBER 11:** Class will meet at Bake Crafters at our usual time. We will have class, then a Christmas potluck, which will start right after our Q&A time. Then we will have an afternoon open discussion.

**JANUARY 15:** Special Sabbath Afternoon live-broadcast event here in Chattanooga on the 3 Angels' Messages. 3 p.m. at Hamilton Community Church

**NEW ROKU CHANNEL:** Come and Reason has just opened a Roku channel and you can find it in Roku by searching for Come and Reason. For those with Roku you can now watch our programs on your TV full screen.

**PROPERTY UPDATE:** The renovation project is out to get contractor bids.

**NEW TRACTS:** We have five new sharing tracts:

- Babylon the Mother of Harlots: Come Out of Her
- Loneliness Its Cause and Cure
- The Injustice of Human Justice
- How to Disagree and Remain Friends
- Knowing God's Will