



2022 1Q In These Last Days: The Message of Hebrews Lesson 4: Jesus, Our Faithful Brother

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SUNDAY

The lesson focuses on Jesus as our Brother and Redeemer, on the concept of kinsmen redeemer. Read first two paragraphs, “The law of Moses...”

Are they saying Jesus is our kinsmen redeemer? Yes, He became a real human, a member of the human species in order to redeem us from sin, no question.

What does it mean for Jesus to redeem us from sin?

- Does Jesus have to pay a price to Satan to buy us back?
- Does Jesus have to pay a price to God to purchase the right to buy us back?
- What is required for us to be delivered from sin?
- Doesn't sin have to be removed from us?
- What is sin? Is it physical?
- Sin is transgression of the law—what law? –the law of love, design law
- What is it that causes transgression of the law? –lies believed break the circle of love and trust resulting in fear/selfishness the carnal nature; this nature, with which we were born, makes it impossible for us in our own strength to live in harmony with God's law. Thus, we were born with a terminal condition that we did not choose and from which we need to be redeemed.
- What is needed to redeem us? Truth that destroys lies and wins us back to trust—"you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32 NIV84). And a new nature, character, heart/mind, we die to fear and selfishness as the controlling motive of our selves/identities and receive the character of Christ, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20 NIV84).
- So to whom is the ransom price paid to redeem us? It is paid to us—we need the truth to win us to trust and we need a new nature/character we become partakers of the divine nature.
- This is design law—it is reality, we are sick in sin and we need actual healing. There is nothing legal going on in this process.

Read third paragraph, “The nearest relative...” Are they saying that if we refuse to let Him redeem us that He will take the role of avenger and kill us to give us just punishment for our sin?

Or are they saying Jesus will use His power to torment and kill Satan and any persons who hurt us, mistreat us, abuse us, or mislead us?



What law lens do we understand this through? Do we use imposed or design law—this is a key to right understanding of Scripture:

- Imposed law: justice requires punishment and there are long theological debates over God's wrath and justice trying to explain these things, but as long as people hold to the false law idea they always end up with God as the source of inflicted pain, suffering and death upon sinners. And they always have Jesus dying to do something to God, appease, propitiate, pay a debt, provide a legal loophole to allow God to save us.
- Design law: all confusion evaporates. We have a terminal sin condition and Jesus' life, death, and resurrection were the means to heal us and restore us back to God's sinless design for life. God kills lies with truth, selfishness with love, and death with life. In the end the unsaved suffer from their unhealed sin condition just as the Bible teaches "those who sow to the carnal nature, from that nature reap destruction" Galatians 6:8. The destruction doesn't come from God, but from unremedied sin.

One key to understanding Scripture is having the design law lens, but there is another key and that is Jesus; His life and teachings.

Do we interpret the ministry of Jesus through the Old Testament, or do we understand the true meaning and lessons of the Old Testament through what Jesus Himself revealed and taught?

Do we find Jesus using power to inflict punishment upon anyone? Why not? Doesn't Jesus care what happens to people? Isn't Jesus concerned about justice?

Did Jesus teach anything about justice?

Justice is doing what is right, what is just. How do we determine what is right or just? By the law—and so we are right back at the root to the entire Great Controversy—God's law—how we understand it.

I love this quotation from *The Great Controversy* it is so right about the root problem that began the war in heaven and upon which it will end here on earth.

The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition. GC 582

God is the God of reality—His laws are the foundation of reality, what everything is built to operate upon. Satan is the father of lies, of made-up things, of ideas that are not based in truth, not based in reality, and that includes the fantasy that God's law is imposed and God is the inflictor of punishments for rule-breaking.



Justice is doing what is right or just—did Jesus teach justice and reveal justice? Where do we find in the life of Jesus God’s design law justice revealed and a refutation of imposed law justice?

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Mt 22:37–40 NIV84).

- Is this an expression of justice—of doing what is right?
- Can this justice be accomplished by rule-keeping or only through transformation of heart and mind?

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Mt 5:38–48 NIV84).

Do you hear justice in this texts?

- When Jesus said that if someone strikes us we should turn the other cheek, is this to be taken literally, or is He saying we should not seek vengeance, not seek to retaliate, not become angry and have hate in our hearts or a desire to hurt the other, but we should still seek their redemption—in other words take action that in that circumstance would be most helpful in reaching the other person with God’s truth?
 - For instance, if a child hits their parent should the parent turn the other cheek and allow the child to strike them without consequence? Or will a loving parent discipline (disciple/teach) the child because the parent wants the child to gain self-mastery, self-discipline and not become a violent person?
 - Do we have an example of Jesus putting this into practice? Yes: “When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby struck him in the face. ‘Is this the way you answer the high priest?’ he demanded. ‘If I said something wrong,’ Jesus replied, “testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?”” (John 18:22-23 NIV84).
 - Did Jesus merely turn the other check, or did Jesus speak truth in love because truth spoken in love in that context was the most helpful action for God’s cause Jesus could take—for those present and also for all of us who read it?
- The law of love seeks to heal and redeem, thus it is focused on motives of heart, not legal actions. Thus we are to love our enemies and pray for them, not seek ways to eliminate them. But in love, we may restrain them. If you had a child who was going out to commit some



terrible crime, and you had the ability to stop them, would you? Why? Merely to protect the victim of their crime, or to protect your child from the soul searing, character warping consequences of committing the crime? Yes, in love we can restrain those who would actively seek to do evil to others.

- One of Satan's lies, counterfeits to love, is sentimentalism, emotionalism, over-empathy—in which people don't set healthy boundaries, don't hold others accountable: parents who don't discipline an unruly child because the child will cry and the parent will feel bad, and what will happen to such a child? We see this in societies (municipalities) in which police are defunded, prosecutors don't enforce the laws, those who commit crimes are not held in prison but returned to society, refusal to arrest those stealing from others—all under the guise of so-called compassion for the less fortunate, the marginalized. It is a lie—it is not compassionate it is evil as it reinforces evil behavior and hardens the hearts of those committing the crime and causes more fear and distrust in the community at large.
- And what examples did Jesus give as evidence of God's actions toward the wicked? He contrasted the emergency measures to bring order to a chaotic and destructive society with Design law. You have heard it said an eye for an eye—while that was necessary to stop blood feuds and killing for any offense and establish community order, the greater reality is that the sun and rain don't discriminate based on the virtue of people. The sun shines equally on all—but the condition of the individual determines the outcome. Some shade themselves (or today use sunscreen) others don't, there is a difference in outcome—but it is not from the sun, it is from the response of the people.
- The outcome of our lives is not up to God; through Jesus He has provided everything necessary for our salvation. Now it is up to us how we respond to all God has done for us. God's love and truth shines down freely upon everyone. Salvation free in Jesus is offered to everyone. It is up to us to decide what happens to us and God leaves us free to reap what we have finally chosen. This is God's justice!

Do we have any examples of Jesus dispensing justice?

- Did Jesus give the woman caught in adultery justice? What about those who brought her? What was the justice He gave them?
- What justice did Jesus give the man who wanted Him to settle his dispute with his brother over their estate?
- What justice did Jesus give both thieves on the crosses next to Him?
- What justice did Jesus give to Herod and Pilate?
- What justice did Jesus give those who crucified Him?

Is it just or unjust to give people what they have chosen, to allow people to reap what they have sown?

The lesson asks us to read Hebrews 2:14-16:



“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants” (Heb 2:14–16 NIV84).

Read fourth paragraph, “This passage...” Do you agree with the passage? This paragraph has multiple false conclusions that leads to false understanding of reality and ultimately misrepresents God, the sin problem, and the solution for it.

Does Hebrews 2:15 say we are slaves of Satan? What does the Bible say enslaves us? Our fear of death, which is the carnal drive of me-first, the survival drives, which means we are slaves of sin—not acts, but the sinful condition. This is what we need deliverance from.

Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin” (John 8:34 NIV84).

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin (Romans 6:6-7 NIV84).

Are we enslaved by Satan or by our fear of death, by sin? If Satan and all of his angels were wiped out from earth today, would sin go away on planet earth? Would each of us be free of temptation? No, even if Satan were destroyed this moment, each of us would still have a carnal nature that tempts. Every person not surrendered to the Holy Spirit would still be under the power of fear and selfishness—this is what enslaves us.

But, after Adam sinned and the human species was fallen, God did not abandon humans to the control or enslavement of Satan. God intervened right there in Eden in human hearts and minds to prevent our hearts and minds from being fully enslaved by Satan. He put enmity between us and Satan, convicting of sin, wooing, drawing, putting a desire for something better and giving us the FREEDOM TO CHOOSE Him rather than having our minds and hearts completely enslaved by Satan.

EGW puts it this way:

The Lord says, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." **The enmity does not exist as a natural fact.** As soon as Adam sinned, he was in harmony with the first great apostate, and at war with God; and **if God had not interfered in man's behalf**, Satan and man would have formed a confederacy against heaven, and carried on united opposition against the God of hosts. There is no natural enmity between evil angels and evil men; both are evil through transgression of the law of God, and evil will always league against good. Fallen men and fallen angels enter into a desperate companionship. {ST, July 11, 1895 par. 5}

James tells us:



When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death” (Jas 1:13–15 NIV84).

Yes, Satan is a real living being, who is evil, selfish, the father of lies, who works against all that is good, a being to whom we can surrender our hearts and minds and to whom we can allow ourselves to become enslaved—but this isn’t the core problem. The core problem is sinfulness in us, fear and selfishness, that we inherited from Adam, what we call the carnal nature with its fear of death.

And what is required to free us? Is it that we are under a legal penalty and some punishment (death penalty) needs to be inflicted? Does this passage say that there is a death penalty that transgression required? Where does the idea that sin requires a penalty be inflicted originate?

“In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. **Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan;** and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice...” DA 761.4

Satan is the originator of the idea that sin must have a punishment inflicted because Satan is the originator of the lie about God’s law, that it is made up rules. If Satan were correct, that God’s law functioned like human law—made up rules, then it would be true that broken law requires the infliction of punishment. But this is not true of God’s law is made up rules. God’s law is design law—the protocols the Creator has built life to operate upon. According to the author of the statement above, three paragraphs later in the same chapter, after making it clear that the idea that sin needs to be punished comes from Satan, she goes on to state exactly what God’s law requires—and it isn’t punishment listen to this:

The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; [Why? for the same reason the law of respiration requires that we breathe—it is the law upon which life is designed to operate. There is no life without living in harmony with God’s law of love.] and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God’s holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and **developed a perfect character.** These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, **Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character,** a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very **righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ.** God can “be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Romans 3:26. DA 762.2

So, God does not have to inflict death as a legal punishment. This is the language of Satan’s view of things.



It is true that the wages of sin is death, that sin when full grown brings forth death—but it is not true that God requires a death penalty. God requires righteousness. And the only way to get righteousness in human beings is for it to be developed by the actions of a human being, and once Adam sinned we could not do it. So Jesus came and took up our cause. He became human and was tempted in all points like us but instead of choosing sin, Jesus chose to live out love perfectly and destroyed the infection, the elements in humanity that incite fear and selfishness.

In Gethsemane and at the cross the two antagonistic principles warred it out in the HUMAN heart and mind of Jesus. And Jesus chose the truth about His Father, chose love for God and love for us, and Jesus chose to trust His Father with His life and very existence rather than using His power to save Himself. Thus, Jesus destroyed the lies of Satan and the infection of fear and selfishness and purified the humanity He took upon Himself thereby developing a perfect mature sinless human character (Hebrews 5:9).

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, “Hebrews says that Jesus...” What is the significance of this for us today? In this world today do you ever feel like those who love Jesus and are loyal to God’s kingdom are in the minority? And if so, does this tempt us to become discouraged, like Elijah when he felt he was the only one? And even when he discovered there were 7000 who had not bowed the knee, how did that compare to all those who had bowed to Baal?

So, Elijah wasn’t alone, but was he in the minority? On earth yes, but we are to have another perspective—that of Elisha. What did he say when the armies surrounded them?

“Don’t be afraid, those who are with us are more than those who are with them” (2 Ki 6:16 NIV84).

This is our perspective when we remember God’s reality—all the rest of the worlds in God’s entire universe along with 2/3 of the angels are on God’s side. It is Satan and the wicked that are in the minority.

The lesson points out that some early Christians were struggling with being ashamed to be called Christians, to identify with Jesus, do we ever struggle with this today?

TUESDAY

Read the third and fourth paragraph, “Hebrews also says, however...” What do you think of the statement, “Jesus came as a Savior and offered Himself as a sacrifice ‘without blemish’ to God for us” (Heb. 7:26-28, Heb. 9:14)?



And then the lesson goes on to say in the next sentence, “Then Jesus destroyed the power of the devil by dying as a sinless Offering for our sins, thus making possible our forgiveness and reconciliation with God (Heb. 2:14-17).”

Put those two thoughts together and ask, What is being taught here?

- Jesus dies and presents His sacrifice to the Father in order to break Satan’s power and make it possible for God to forgive us?
- If He is breaking Satan’s power why is He offering His sacrifice to God for us?
- Are they saying Satan holds power over God or God needs the blood of Jesus in order free Himself from Satan’s control?
- Or that Jesus blood gives God some legal opening to act against Satan?
- What are they saying?

This is all misconstrued based on the false imposed law construct. Let’s lay out the truth:

It all starts with God’s law. How do we understand God’s law? Rules made up requiring external enforcement, or the design protocols the Creator built life to operate upon?

The law of God is the standard of health, of righteousness, if we replace God’s design law with human imposed law, then we misdiagnose the sin problem as a legal problem rather than a lethal problem—a problem with our state of being.

Once we understand that after Adam’s sin he and Eve were not loving, faithful, righteous beings whose hearts and minds still operated upon love and trust but who now had a legal problem—no, they had a lethal problem. They were changed in their inmost being to be fearful and selfish and without intervention from God would die *of their terminal sin condition*.

Thus the solution—our salvation requires our condition to be changed back to love and trust and have fear and selfishness removed.

From the sinner’s side of the divide, what is require of us, for us to be saved? We sinners are required to trust God. Why? Because without trust we won’t open our hearts and minds to God for Him to heal and change. If God were to use divine power to force a change on an unwilling person, someone who doesn’t trust, someone who doesn’t willingly cooperate for their own heart transformation, that act of God would destroy that person’s individuality and replace it with either a new individual or a robot. It would also demonstrate that God is a being other than love who doesn’t give real freedom and forces His all to do what He wants. God will NEVER do this. Our healing, transformation, salvation requires our voluntary participation, meaning we must trust God and open our hearts to Him, inviting Him in and choose to follow where He leads.

But from God’s side of the sin divide, God had to provide truth that refuted Satan’s lies in order to win us to trust and secure the unfallen angels in loyalty, but something more was required in order to save sinners from sin. (To stop with only a revelation of truth to win to trust is the Moral Influence Theory of Atonement). In order to save sinners, in addition to revealing truth, God had to actually fix the



damage to the human species that sin had caused and provide a real remedy that would cure the condition of all those who trust Him. Thus we read in Scripture the multifold achievements of Jesus our Savior:

- He revealed truth, which exposed Satan as liar, secured the unfallen universe, and won humanity back to trust:
 - “God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” Colossians 1:19, 20
- He destroyed Satan and his power.
 - “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.” Hebrews 2:14
- He destroyed the infection of selfishness and cured humankind.
 - “Christ Jesus, who has **destroyed death** and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Timothy 1:10
- Destroyed the devil’s work.
 - “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.” 1 John 3:8
- Christ destroyed selfishness, the basis of death.
- Christ restored the law of love into humanity, the basis of life.
- His resurrection was the only outcome of the law of love being restored!
“The law of the Lord is perfect reviving the soul.” Psalm 19:7

This is why Jesus had to come to earth, become a real human, live a sinless life as a human, overcome every temptation, die to destroy the infection of fear and selfishness and restore the law of love back into the place God originally designed for it to be—the heart and mind of human beings.

Turn to **WEDNESDAY**’s lesson, this is what it means to be made perfect:

Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him... (Heb 5:8–9 NIV84).

What does this text mean? What does it mean to be *made* perfect? Wasn’t Jesus always perfect? He was always sinless, but Bible perfection is about maturity of character. Character cannot be created by God, it must be developed by the sentient being. After Adam sinned no other human could develop a perfect mature righteous human character—this is what Jesus did for us and this is what is required for us to be saved, to receive by faith, by trust, the indwelling Spirit that takes the perfection or maturity of Christ and reproduces it in us. We die to fear and selfishness and we trust God with our lives and no longer live controlled by the fear of death—we are set free in Jesus to love God and others as He loves us.

Read third paragraph, “1. Jesus was ‘perfected’...” What are they saying? Are they saying the law required God to kill? Are they saying that God was restricted by some legal authority over Himself? Are they saying Jesus had to present His blood to the Father to pay a legal debt to God lest God would



be required to kill us? Who, in this view is the source of death? Do you see how they make God out to be the source of death, the one from whom we need to be protected?

What if Jesus didn't pay our debt to God—what would they say God would do?

This is the plan of salvation presented through the lens of Rome, the wine of Babylon, the lie that God's law functions like human law. Such views are pagan and not in keeping with Scripture.

THURSDAY

What do you think of the idea of Jesus as our Model or Example?

How is He not our model?

- Will any of us every have to tread the winepress alone?
- Will any of us, who seek God, ever be abandoned by God as Jesus experienced in Gethsemane and at the Cross?
- Will any of us be tempted to turn rocks to bread?

So there are aspects of Jesus' life that we will never have to face—and praise God for that.

How is He our model?

Jesus said, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (Jn 20:21 NIV84).

What did the Father send Jesus to do that we are to do?

If we are content to take a low level in the Christian life, the truth will never become wrought into a deep experience; we shall not be fruit-bearing branches; we shall not honor God. **Kind words, kind looks, kind deeds, and thoughtful consideration of others,—these are the fruits that grow on the Christian tree. Jesus is our example, and we must form our characters after his. By beholding his purity and perfection, we shall be changed into the same image.** [Law of worship] If Christ is dwelling in us, we shall reveal him in all our actions, and we shall see new charms in him every day. It is impossible to tell what work God will do for us and through us, if we will only consent to become channels of light. RH May 7, 1889, par. 3

The Lord Jesus is our example. He came to the world as the servant of mankind. He went from city to city, from village to village, teaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing the sick. **Christ spent more time in healing than in teaching.** RH September 10, 1908, par. 4

As our example, Christ linked closely together the work of healing and teaching, and in this our day they should not be separated. In our schools and sanitariums, nurses should be



trained to go out as a medical missionary evangelists. **They should unite the teaching of the gospel of Christ with the work of healing.** RH September 10, 1908, par. 5

Why?

Because healing people requires we return them to harmony with the laws of health, which are design laws. We cannot have physical health while violating the laws of health—and we cannot have eternal life while living out of harmony with God’s design laws for life—the law of love, truth, and liberty.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

New Release: The Final Message of Mercy to the World—The Three Angels, magazine.

You can read a digital “flip book” version online at our website.

<https://comeandreason.com/files/flipbooks/3Angels/>