



## 2023 1Q Managing for the Master Till He Comes—Lesson 11 Managing in Tough Time

by Tim Jennings

### SABBATH

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Read Memory Text:

Offer to God thanksgiving,  
And pay your vows to the Most High.  
Call upon Me in the day of trouble;  
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me. (Psalm 50:14-15 NKJV)

What does this text mean to you? What is the message?

What does it mean to pay one's vows to God?

- Other versions have fulfill your vows to God, which makes sense, to fulfill one's vows means to be honest, loyal, faithful, true, responsible—to do what you say.
- I am just not sure about the word pay, it makes it sound more mechanical, more transactional, more commercial, something we have to do to get something from God.
- In reality our loyalty, faithfulness, honesty with God doesn't change God, it is necessary for us to be able to stay attuned with God, to align with God, to be in harmony with God, to connect, hear, understand, and value what God values, to receive the wisdom and power of God to be victorious.

What does it mean to call upon the Lord and the day of trouble and God will deliver us and we will glorify God?

- Have you known people who have found themselves in troubles not of their own making—maybe a victim of a thug, someone who was trafficked, or in a war zone and displaced, someone suffering from a terminal disease and such a person called upon God to deliver them, but the war didn't stop, the crime was not interrupted, the disease wasn't cured?
- Do you think the martyrs called upon God when they were being tortured in the arenas of Rome?

How do we explain this Bible verse to those who have called upon the Lord in times of trouble but the trouble was not taken away?

Does the deliverance that God promises mean rescue from all earthly difficulty?



Jesus said:

“But before all this, they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. This will result in your being witnesses to them. But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. All men will hate you because of me. But not a hair of your head will perish. By standing firm you will gain life.” (Luke 21:12-19 NIV84).

So what do these texts mean? How can God promise to deliver us but then say that we will be persecuted and some even put to death, but not a hair on your head will perish? Does the Bible contradict itself? Does God make false promises?

How do you explain this?

What is the entire point, focus, purpose of Scripture? The plan of salvation! Is the plan of salvation the plan of temporal deliverance or eliminating sin and restoring sinners to eternal life?

The God’s promises and actions are always geared toward the plan of removing sin and restoring sinners to eternal life.

Jesus said,

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

He is saying in Luke 21 that the evil powers in this world will seek to destroy the righteous, that evil forces may even kill the body of the righteous, but we will not perish, not the smallest piece of our true selves will perish, i.e., be eternally destroyed, for all who trust in Jesus will be resurrected to eternal life.

So, this is how I rendered our memory verse:

So bring me what matters — a heart thankful to God,  
and give the Most High your loyalty, just as you have promised;  
call upon me when you are hurting and distressed,  
and I will heal you, transforming your character, and you will glorify me." (Psalm 50:14,15  
REM).

Read first paragraph,

Sometimes our world seems to be spinning out of control: wars, bloodshed, crime, immorality, natural disasters, pandemics, economic uncertainty, political corruption, and more. There is a



strong urge for individuals and families to think first of their own survival. Accordingly, much thought is given to seeking security in these uncertain times, which, of course, is understandable. (2023 1Q SDA Adult Bible Study Guide page 88).

What is described? What is driving people to seek security? Fear—do only the wicked experience fear or are the righteous also tempted by fear?

And are there different options to resolve fear available to the righteous that the rejectors of God do not have? What are the options the righteous have that those who have rejected God do not have to resolve our fear?

- Trust in God
- Prayer
- Claiming God's promises
- Trustworthy friends of God
- The protection of angels
- The presence of the Holy Spirit
- Love for God and others poured into our hearts
- Purpose bigger than self

If the rejectors of God do not have these means to cope with fear, what actions do they take to seek security?

- Running away to somewhere they believe is safe
- Fighting—seeking to destroy what they perceive as the source of their fear

And what methods will the ungodly use?

- Force, coercion, control over others
- Mandates
- Restriction of liberties
- Restriction on free speech
- Accusations, name calling
- Propaganda and lies
- Economic sanctions and financial pressure

Have you seen this happening in the world?

Why do you think this is happening?

Where is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit on Earth? In the hearts and minds of people—and what happens as billions of people harden their hearts and minds to the Holy Spirit? The Spirit slowly withdraws.

And as the Spirit withdraws, what happens to Satanic forces? They get more liberty to act. And what do satanic forces do with more liberty? And things become more debased, chaotic, destructive.



But why would God allow this? Why not just intervene and stop it?

Over the last couple of years, I have attended several medical conventions in which the presenters spoke in positive ways of how wonderfully the health delivery system, and they the doctors and nurses, did during COVID. They were specifically praising how they rallied and worked so hard to lock down, wear masks, and give as many injections as they could.

They were completely oblivious to how such actions, taken globally, killed millions more people than any that might have been saved by their actions.

I could see the truth, but these people didn't. What needs to happen for them to break out of their delusion? Reality based consequences over time.

I realized that God permits people to make their choices and then lets the consequences come to bear, and when things get more chaotic these events will awaken the people who have the capacity to still recognize truth to ask what is going on, what is happening in the world? But those who have already destroyed the faculties God has given us that respond to truth and love will misinterpret the evidence and will blame the righteous for the cause of the chaos and destruction.

It will be important, when the sleeping people wake up and ask what is happening, that God's people are ready and capable of telling the truth about what is happening of intelligently advancing His kingdom—being able to explain and demonstrate the difference between the methods and principles of God and those of this world. This goes far beyond a list of doctrines, but to understanding reality and its operations, meaning understanding God's design laws and their application to every phase of our existence. We need to have resources available tracts, magazines, books, videos, podcasts that are all presenting the truth.

And from the witness of God's faithful a great multitude will respond and embrace the truth and be saved.

Sincerely asking what is going on with no one to present the truth would be a sad thing. Paul wrote in Romans 10:13-15:

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” (Romans 10:13-15 NIV84).

So, what is God waiting for? Why the delay in the second coming? Why does God still hold back the final events? Because God is waiting for His people to be sealed, to be settled into the truth about Him so that they cannot be moved, so that He can pour out the latter rain upon them to empower them to take the final message of mercy to the world. And when that happens then the four winds loosen and



things continue to unravel, a great multitude from every nation, tribe, language and people will hear the witness of God's friends and be saved.

This is what it means that judgment starts with the house of God (1 Peter 4:17). God's people are the first to recognize the truth and make the right judgment about God, to reject the imperial Roman dictator view of God as a god who makes up rules and then uses His power to punish rule breakers and instead worships Him as the Creator, the One who made the heaven, earth, sea, and fountain of waters. We do this by rejecting the imposed law lie and realizing God's laws are design laws.

As we settle into the truth about God, returning to Creator worship, judging Him to be completely trustworthy, we open our hearts to receiving the indwelling Spirit of God that heals and transforms us and empowers us to not only resist the corruption of this age, the godless philosophies of the green earth-worshippers, and the godless critical theorists, and the godless greedy corporate merchants of the earth—we resist the powers of this age and stay true to the design laws and principles of Jesus Christ.

## SUNDAY

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The title of the lesson is Putting God First and focuses our attention on the famous story of Jehoshaphat and the army coming to destroy Judah and how the king, when he heard of the threat, immediately decided to inquire of the Lord and called a fast for all of Judah. And after prayerfully inquiring of the Lord, the prophet of God told the king this:

He said: "Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the LORD says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow march down against them... You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you.'" (2 Chronicles 20:15-17 NIV84).

The lesson then asks what are the spiritual principles we can take from this story?

- Always seek God first!
- Trust God with the future, with how things turn out
- Don't give in to fear and discouragement when things of this world seem beyond you

Other lessons?

Does this mean that we are never to engage in any battles, that we are never to actively fight in any type of conflict, that we are always to remain passive in every conflict and exclusively wait for the Lord to act and deliver us?

If so, what does 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 mean?



For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NIV84).

Are there battles in which we are to seek God, surrender to Him, trust Him, follow His direction, but to also to actively fight?

Paul makes clear here that we are to fight but we are not to use the weapons of the world—and Jehoshaphat demonstrates how he did not use the weapons of the world. We are not to go to war seeking to dominate and control people with physical might and coercions. We are not to seek to destroy or kill our enemies.

What about using the power of the state to bring order, to govern, to pass laws? Are we to seek to control the state to pass laws to force others to live as we believe is in harmony with God's will?

If we are not to do this does that mean we should have no laws and let crime flourish?

The only righteous use of might and power is in the restraint of those seeking to actively harm others. In restraining the evil-doer we protect all parties, we protect the innocent, and we protect the evil-doer from doing more damage to their own characters and consciences. But restraint does not advance righteousness. Any time governments move away from setting healthy boundaries for maximizing human liberty to instead advancing some moral agenda, such as the green movement and many other woke policies currently being advanced, but it could also be religious right policies such that we saw in history requiring church attendance, either way, such laws that seek to coerce conscience and force moral behavior always results in causing more harm, inciting rebellion, and leading to fractures in society.

We are not to restrict liberty, we are not to threaten people's livelihoods, or restrict commerce—the beast is the one who tells people they cannot buy or sell unless they receive his mark.

What are the divine weapons we are to use? Truth, love, liberty, prayer, faith/trust in God, hope, wisdom and discernment, patience, kindness, gentleness, meekness.

We are to present the truth, in love and leave others free. We are to trust God with outcomes; we are to remain hopeful, but we are to be active in the cause of God, not passive, yet wise in our actions, not purposely antagonizing or casting our pearls before those who we know will only be offended and have no interest in the truth.

Besides opposing lies, policies, and practices that are contrary to the kingdom of God and destroy minds, increase fear, and incite selfishness where else are we to do active warfare or engage in serious conflict and battle?



Here are two historic quotes that speak of battles that we are to be active in, yet in a strange way. What do you think?

**Battles are to be fought every day. A great warfare is going on over every soul, between the prince of darkness and the Prince of life....** As God's agents you are to yield yourselves to [God], **that He may plan and direct and fight the battle for you, with your cooperation.** The Prince of life is at the head of His work. He is to be with you **in your daily battle with self**, that you may be true to principle; that passion, when warring for the mastery, may be subdued by the grace of Christ; that you come off more than conqueror through Him that hath loved us. Jesus has been over the ground. He knows the power of every temptation. He knows just how to meet every emergency, and how to guide you through every path of danger. Then why not trust Him? Conflict and Courage 117.

**The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought.** The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God, and being clothed with humility, possessing that love that is pure, peaceable, and easy to be entreated, full of gentleness and good fruits, is not an easy attainment.... **The soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in knowledge and true holiness.** The holy life and character of Christ is a faithful example. His confidence in his heavenly Father was unlimited. His obedience and submission were unreserved and perfect. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister to others. He came not to do his own will, but the will of Him that sent him. In all things he submitted himself to Him that judges righteously. From the lips of the Saviour of the world were heard these words, "I can of mine own self do nothing." [John 5:30.] Gospel Worker 376

Does the battle with self require our active engagement? But what is the active choice or action we are to take? To actively surrender to Christ, we cannot win the battle with selfishness and fear by our own effort or willpower, we win by being won to trust in Jesus and surrendering ourselves, our longings, our fears, our desires, our hopes and dreams, our futures to Him and trusting Him. He then works a change in us, instilling love and removing guilt, shame, and fear and our faith, confidence, trust, hope, joy, peace all increase. We are transformed to live lives in harmony with Him rather than in harmony with the survival methods of this world.

## MONDAY

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The lesson focuses on our need to trust God and not our own resources and uses the story of King David being tempted to take a census of Israel when God told him not to.

Why didn't God want David to take a census? Because David would be tempted to put his faith in his spearman, chariots, warriors, and money rather than God. So Satan tempted David to take a census as a means to get David to take his focus off of God and place it onto the things this world values—power, might, and wealth.

Do we ever struggle with the same temptation today?



Most of us don't have soldiers to count, so what kinds of things does the devil tempt us to trust in rather than God?

- Wealth?
- Retirement plans, SSI?
- Fame?
- What about agreement of others, what others think? I have many patients who live their lives in constant pursuit of and fear of the what others think of them. If others affirm them, they feel good, if others are upset with them or criticize them they fall into emotional distress. Are we to make the attitudes and opinions of others the source of our peace and wellbeing?
- Our own intelligence?
- The government?
- Science and medical experts?
- Injections, masks, lockdowns?
- Others?

Was God trying to instruct, through this story with David, that all His faithful followers should not keep accurate records of their assets and resources, that we should not have accountants, that we should not know the size of our estate or the number of employees in our business?

Not at all, God was teaching the simple lesson that we should not place our faith in anything other than Him.

Read the fourth paragraph,

In our immediate context, it is very tempting to trust in the power of the government or in our bank accounts, but in every crisis mentioned in the Bible, when the people trusted in God, He honored their trust and provided for them. (2023 1Q SDA Adult Bible Study Guide page 90).

Have you seen people placing their trust in the government rather than God over the past couple of years? And how has that turned out?

I saw this division quite clearly, those who love God and others did not advance a cause based on fear. They presented a course of action that they believed was the best course, but they were willing to leave others free to decide for themselves what was best for their lives.

But those who were not motivated by love, but instead were motivated by fear, believed that science, or the government could keep them safe. They believed that it was right and good to force others to act in certain ways, to restrict freedom of speech, worship, assembly, travel, commerce and even force people to take drugs they did not want. And many of the people who did this convinced themselves they were only do this to save lives, because they loved others.





But it was all a grand evil manipulation of minds by fear and propaganda and those in whose hearts fear was stronger than love turned to the governments and supported the ungodly actions of the beastly systems of this world.

It was an object lesson, a wakeup call, a warning of the abomination that causes desolation that is about to break upon the world for the final conflict before Christ returns. The events around COVID—a worldwide orchestrated violation of the principles of God—serve in a similar way to the Roman army surrounding Jerusalem in AD 70. The Romans surrounded Jerusalem, then pulled back, the Christians remembered Christ’s warning and fled, and when the Roman army came back and destroyed the city no Christian lost their life there.

We have just had our warning to prepare our hearts and minds for the methods and practices of the final worldwide beastly system. All those who have embraced God’s design law methods are called to leave the systems of this world, to leave Babylon, God’s call recorded in Revelation is “come out of her my people.” This isn’t a geographical leaving, it is leaving with your heart, cutting your ties of loyalty and affection to systems and organizations that would use beastly methods on its members or support the governments in doing such things to its citizens. It is a call to solidify your hearts, minds, and characters into the methods and principles of God in how you treat others.

It is only a short time and final events are going to unfold on this world.

## **TUESDAY**

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Read first paragraph:

What should Seventh-day Adventist Christians do in response to difficult times? Do we hunker down in a survival mode? No, in fact, just the opposite is true. Because we know that the end of the world and the second coming of Christ is near, we want to use our assets to tell others the good news of the gospel and what God has prepared for those who love Him. We understand that someday soon everything on this earth will be burned up. (2023 1Q SDA Adult Bible Study Guide page 91).

How are you preparing for the final events preceding the coming of Christ? Are our primary preparations for the final events to be physical preparations, prepare bunkers, food caches, and emergency shelters to flee to? Or are our primary preparations to be preparing our hearts and minds to stand firm in the face of persecution, to solidify our faith and trust in God?

The lesson asks us to read 2 Peter 3:3-13, I will read it from The Remedy:

First of all, understand and don't be surprised that in the last days, scoffers and doubters will arise: they will prefer the sickness of selfishness while ridiculing the cure, labeling the infection of selfishness as 'normal. 'They will say, "Survival-of-the-fittest is the way the universe runs: this is why we are here — not because of divine creation. Where is this so-called



God? Where is the coming he promised? Ever since human history has been recorded, the principles of evolution have governed life, and all things continue just as they always have. "But these scoffers deliberately deny the truth and ignore the fact that long ago, by God's Word, the world was created out of water and with water. They reject the fact that it was by these same waters that a flood destroyed the world, and they refuse to believe that the same Word has testified that the present world, which is kept for the day of final diagnosis and the elimination of everyone and everything deviant from God's design, will be destroyed by fire.

But don't forget the true nature of God's kingdom of love. Understand that the Lord lives outside the constraints of time, and with him a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. There is no delay on his part in keeping his promise to return: he is simply waiting for what he has always been waiting for—the Remedy to be taken to the entire world so that none who remain curable will be lost.

But the Lord's return — coming suddenly like a thief — will surprise many people: There will be a loud roar and the sky will disappear; the very elements will melt in the intense heat, and the entire planet will be laid bare.

Since everything the world values will end in this way, what kind of people are you to be? Each person must partake of the Remedy and be healed, live a life that loves others and honors God as you anticipate our Lord's return, and work to speed his coming. On that day, the atmosphere of selfishness will be consumed by fire, and the very elements contaminated by sin will melt in the intense heat. But just as promised, Jesus will make a new atmosphere and an entirely new earth—free from disease and defect, free from the infection of selfishness—the eternal home of the healed. (2 Peter 3:3-13 REM)

The lesson reminds us that we are to have this eternal reality in mind as we live. While we must occupy until Jesus comes, we are not to live for the pleasures of this world, but to be purposeful in taking actions that are designed to spread the good news about God and hasten the day of His return.

That is what Come and Reason Ministries was founded to do, to advance what we believe is the final message of mercy to the world, the truth about God's character of love and His methods of truth, love, and freedom. And the key to properly understanding Scripture and God's character of love is how one understands God's law—if we understand God's law to be functionally no different than the imposed rules made up by humans then we teach ideas about God that make Him out to be no different in character than us—a rule-monger who uses power over others to force His way and inflict punishment for rule breaking. But when we return to worshiping the Creator we realize God's laws are the protocols reality is built upon and any deviation from those laws causes injury and eventual death unless remedied by our Creator. In this view God is the source of life and health, the Healer and Savior of our souls and it is sin that is the cause of pain, suffering, and death.

This truth about God, when embraced and internalized transforms the soul.



## WEDNESDAY

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The lesson asks us to read 1John 2:15-17:

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. (1 John 2:15-17 NKJV).

What does this text mean?

There are two antagonistic principles or motives vying for every heart and mind—fear/selfishness versus love.

God's kingdom is the kingdom of love whereas Satan's kingdom is the kingdom of selfishness based on fear. The more fear the more self-centered we become and the more willing we are to harm others. The more love the less fear and the more willing we are to sacrifice to help others.

John is telling us that the survival drives of me-first fear driven selfishness of this sinful world manifests in three primary ways or avenues or desires or drives:

- The lust of the flesh—sensualism
- The lust of the eyes—materialism
- The pride of life—egotism

The Bible tells us that after Adam sinned we are all born of a sinful mother and a sinful father, we are “born in sin, conceived in iniquity” (Psalms 51:5). Which means we are born genetically vulnerable to these various selfish desires.

Some are born genetically more vulnerable to the sensual sins, the addictions, and lusts of the flesh. Others are born more genetically vulnerable to greed, materialism, or ego and pride.

But the Bible teaches that despite these vulnerabilities of our birth, because of Jesus and God's grace we still remain free to decide whether we will give in to these temptations or instead surrender to God for the renewing of our mind and the recreation of new hearts and right spirits within, which gives us new desires and new motives.

We have the choice, say yes to the temptations, or say no and surrender to God.

As we open the heart to God the Holy Spirit comes in and, using the Bible metaphor, circumcises our hearts. This means the Spirit of God cuts away from our affections, our longings, our reward pathways, the attachments we have to the destructive things of this world and establishes attachment to the things of God. But this work of reorienting our heart to the things of God requires a daily surrender to God, requires our active choice and agreement with the Spirit of God.



The transformation that happens within the heart and mind of a sinner is accomplished by the power of God but by our choice—we choose to say yes to God and no to temptation and evil, we choose to surrender to God, to open the heart, to believe the truth, to trust God with our lives, but it is God who provides the truth, changes the desires, and provides the divine power to succeed.

We can never experience a new heart and right spirit by our own effort. But God can never transform a heart into righteousness against the will of that person. That person must freely choose—why? It isn't that God doesn't have the power. He is God He has the power. But to use divine power to change a heart against the desire, intent, and will of the person would destroy that person's identity and individuality and effectively erase that person from existence. What would be the result would be either a robot or a new intelligent being, but the previous individual would be lost. This is why God doesn't use power to force a change of heart, and why it requires are active and willful participation.

Can you trust a God who would not only sacrifice Himself to save you and me, but operates in such a way that we never lose our freedom. He never uses His power to override our individuality?

## THURSDAY

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The lesson focuses our attention on Revelation 13:11-17:

Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. (Revelation 13:11-17 NIV84)

What does this mean?

If you haven't read our recent magazine [Unmasking the Beasts of Revelation 13 & 17](#) I encourage you to do so. You can read it online if you like, or if you have a US postal address email us and we will mail you one at no cost. This is also available in South Africa, so if you are in South Africa and would like a physical copy you can send an email to [comeandreason.sa@gmail.com](mailto:comeandreason.sa@gmail.com)



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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**New Billboard Resource:** In response to requests from our listeners, we have developed some billboards, and will be developing and releasing new ones periodically. They will be released in sets that have the same slogan with different layouts and images. These are available for anyone who would like to download and use them in their community. Come and Reason Ministries is not, at this time, planning on purchasing billboard space, but we are making these available for those who want to put billboards up in their community.