



# 2023 4Q God's Mission My Mission Lesson 1

## God's Mission to Us - 1

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

### INTRODUCTION

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In the introduction they describe a parable of a dreadful swamp in which people in which people often were overcome and died, and how their distressing cries could be heard by the people of the nearby village.

The people of the village got together and held meetings, counsels, wrote papers, advanced theories as to what to do, held fundraisers to support the people who were sacrificing work time to spend time in the meetings, but they never actually did anything to help the people dying in the swamp.

What are the lessons from this parable?

This is why we at Come and Reason Ministries create materials that we give away to people, materials that are not just theory, but are practical, applicable, and bring real change to people's lives.

It is why we go to events like the American Association of Christian Counselors, which we were at last week. And while there we gave away all kinds of resources:

- The Remedy and Remedy Psalms
- God is Love children's book
- Could It Be This Simple?
- Unmasking the Beasts of Revelation 13 and 17 magazine
- Critical Race Theory Unmasking the Lies While Advancing the Gospel magazine
- The Wedding of Christ to His Bride magazine
- The Final Message of Mercy to the World—the Three Angels magazine
- Meditation Biblical versus Easter guide
- The Book of Job and the Last Days pamphlet
- 9 different tracts



We had more people that we can count come up and tell us how they follow us online, how they use our materials with their patients and church members. We heard many stories of how lives have been changed, people who were doubting God giving their hearts to Him. People came back to get more materials to share.

People were blown away with the quality of the materials, but also the fact that we were giving it all away when everyone else was selling. I was stopped in the hallways more than once by people thanking me, telling me they love our ministry, or telling me how much the materials were appreciated.

More times that we could count people came up to us and asked us how we are able to do give it all away. Some asked if I was independently wealthy. One man came up and said he represented another not for profit ministry and his task during this conference was to go to other not for profit ministries and inquire how they monetized their ministry—what worked for them. And when I told him we have never done a fund raiser, we don't solicit, we give away our materials and people whose lives have been changed often choose to start supporting us in producing and sharing these materials with others. We told him we practice the principle of freely you have received freely give. And he shook his head and said he has never head anything like this.

So, we want you to know we are doing more than sitting in committees, we are producing materials, sharing resources, and meeting people and seeing lives changed for God's kingdom.

## **SABBATH**

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The lesson begins by pointing out God initiates mission and relationships—God created life, angels, Adam and Eve, and after sin God sought Adam—God went on a mission to reach fallen humanity, to reconnect, and to provide all that is necessary to save and restore humans back to sinless perfection.

Then the lesson says:

- The foundation of any mission endeavor, therefore, must be centered on a relationship with the Creator and with the proper understanding of His missionary nature and character. But before we understand the mission of God, it is essential to better understand the God of mission. (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023,



God's Mission My Mission p. 6).

What does it mean to build a relationship with the Creator, to understanding His missionary nature and character, and His mission?

Would this relate to the 3 Angels' messages and calling people back to Creator worship?

And what does that entail?

At the AACC a nice young man come up to me and asked about the mark of the beast in our Unmasking the Beasts of Revelation 13 and 17 magazine. He wanted to know if someone who was saved could get the mark of the beast.

What would you say to that?

I asked him what he meant by being saved? Did he mean someone who made a proclamation of faith in Jesus, was baptized in a church, identified as a Christian, joined a Christian church and began doing mission work in the name of Jesus? He thought that sounded right, so I asked him, then what about Jesus words:

- 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!' (Matthew 7:22–23 NIV84).

Are these people Christians? He didn't know how to answer that, but wasn't sure about my suggesting these people were Christians. So I pointed out the parable of the 10 virgins who represent the church: the 5 wise and 5 foolish—and asked, "Are those five foolish, who are members of the church, and who are not allowed into the kingdom because they have no oil in their lamps, meaning that they are lost in the end, saved at some point or never saved?"

He didn't know how to answer. I pointed out Caiaphas and Annas the High Priests who thought they were leading God's people and believed they, as High Priests, were anointed by God but yet they crucified Jesus. Were they saved?



I pointed out the Christians in the Dark Ages who went on crusades or burned people at the stake in the name of Jesus, were they saved because they claimed to be following Jesus?

So, the point is, can people identify themselves as Christian, make a profession of faith, go through the ritual of baptism, join the church organization they believe is God's church, and engage in activities that are mission oriented to advance what they understand to be the gospel, yet still be unsaved, and be working against God, working for God's enemy, and even hold church office? Remember the wheat and tares grow up together in the church until the harvest.

So, can a person who is saved receive the mark of the beast—well again it depends on what you mean by saved, what does it mean to be saved?

What would you say?

We talked about experiencing a new heart and right spirit, being reborn, having the heart circumcised by the Holy Spirit, having the law written upon the heart, which ultimately results in being sealed by the Holy Spirit—which is having transformation of character so that we are so settled into the truth about God both intellectually and spiritually, that like Job, no matter what comes we will not be shaken from our love, loyalty, and devotion to God and the living out of His methods and principles. Such people do not receive the mark of the beast because they are sealed of God.

But he said, but sometimes I don't do what I know is right, sometimes I fail, I fall short, I get angry and say things that are not right—am I lost. What would you say to that?

I pointed him to Romans chapter seven, this is from the Remedy:

- I am frustrated with what I do! For having been restored to trust, I want to do what is in harmony with God and his methods and principles; but I find that even though I trust God, my old habits, conditioned responses, preconceived ideas and other remnants of the devastation caused by distrust and selfishness are not yet fully removed. And if I find an old habit causing me to behave in ways that I now find detestable, I affirm that the law is a very helpful tool revealing residual damage in need of healing. What is happening is this: I have come to trust God, and I desire to do his will, but old habits and conditioned responses — which



present almost reflexively in certain situations — have not yet been totally eliminated and thus cause me to do things I do not want to do. I know that my mind was completely infected with distrust, fear and selfishness, which totally perverted all my desires and faculties, so that even when distrust has been eradicated and trust has been restored, the damage caused by years of distrustful and selfish behavior has not yet been fully healed. So, I find that at times, I have the desire to do what is right, but do not yet have the ability to carry out the desire. For the old habits and conditioned responses are not the good I want to do: No! They are remnants of my selfish, unconverted mind. So, if I find myself doing what I no longer desire to do, it is not myself that acts, but the vestiges of old habits and conditioned responses that have yet to be removed. And through God's grace, they will soon be removed. (Romans 7:15-20 REM)

The difference between a saved and unsaved person is that the saved person, when old habits emerge, is grieved and goes to God in sorrow and repentance not only for forgiveness, but transforming power to change so they gain victory and stop repeating such behaviors over time. The unconverted, unsaved, person justify and defend their sinful actions, they blame others, claim that the other person deserved what they got etc.

So, what do you think was the root of this individual's concern, and how do you see me handling it?

Does the law lens people hold have any bearing on how they understand the sin problem and God's solution, what it means to be saved? And does worshipping the Creator have anything to do with how we understand God's law?

If we worship the Creator we worship the Builder of reality, not just the Builder, but the Bible says He is the Sustainer, holding all things together. His laws are the laws that reality functions upon, design law. Breaking them injures and causes death. God is working through Christ to eliminate breaks in His law that cause death and restore His people back into harmony with Him and His law of love.

Thus the mission of God is redemptive, saving, healing, transforming, cleansing, recreating—and salvation means to be reborn, healed, cleansed, transformed, renewed, restored and ultimately sealed in heart and mind to be like Jesus in character and function.

But if one holds the human law model, imposed rules that require the rule giver to use



power to torture and kill, then one is not won back to trust that god, but to trust in some mechanism to propitiate that god, whether it is human works, penances, ceremonies, sacraments, or the works of another intercessor who will plead to that false punishing god in our behalf offering that god the legal blood payment to assuage his wrath. The confidence, faith, trust is not in the god, it is in the various other mechanics, saints, or mediators who are working on that god to stop him from killing us.

Further, through the law of worship, which is a design law of how we are transformed and changed, if we worship an authoritarian rule-enforcing god, we become authoritarian, legal, and we find emotional security in some form of legal authority, some payment, some claim of legal forgiveness and salvation through legal means.

So what does it mean to be marked beastly? It means to embrace and practice the methods of the beast on others, to mark oneself in mind, heart, character, and function to be beastlike.

So, what is God's mission and how do we enter into a relationship with the Creator and join Him in His mission?

## SUNDAY

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Read first paragraph:

- God created us in His image and likeness. He gave us a perfect world, and His purpose was that we would live in perfect connection with Him, a relationship centered in His most precious attribute: love. But for love to be real, God also gave us another precious gift: free will—the freedom to choose which way to follow. Of course, God gave clear instructions to Adam and Eve about the danger and deadly consequences of disobedience (Gen. 2:16, 17). Satan, in turn, deceptively persuaded Eve that she could eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but without any negative results. On the contrary, he claimed that they would “be like God, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:5, NKJV). Unfortunately, Eve chose to eat and gave the fruit to Adam, who made the same choice. The perfect creation, then, was stained by sin. (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 7).



This is so well said, the lesson emphasizing that God is love is absolutely right and it is right that love can only exist in freedom and God gives real freedom, and how God in love warned Adam and Eve of the deadly *consequences* of sin—not the threat of inflicted punishment from God. This is well said. And how Satan deceived, and what do lies that are believed do to the circle of love and trust?

And when the circle of love and trust is broken what results? Fear and selfishness, so let's read the second and third paragraphs:

- That moment changed God's original plan and purpose for the newly created planet Earth. The mission of salvation, which had been designed "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4), had now to be implemented.

Of course, God knew exactly where they were. Dominated by fear, Adam and Eve were the ones who needed to see what was going on. But they also needed to be confronted so they could understand the dreadful consequences of their sin. Satan also needed to be defeated. For that, God then began to present His mission: the plan of redemption (see Gen. 3:14, 15)—the only hope of "reconciling the world to Himself" (2 Cor. 5:19, NKJV). (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 7).

Again, well said by the lesson. As soon as Adam and Eve sinned the living law of God, the law of other centered love was replaced with fear and selfishness, the survival of the fittest drives, this is what the Bible calls the law of sin and death.

When Adam and Eve sinned what changed? Did God get changed? Did God's law get changed? It was the condition of Adam and Eve that change!

Since the change sinned caused was in Adam and Eve, where will the remedy, the solution, the healing power of God have to be applied in order to save human sinners? In human beings.

Understand this, the entire plan of salvation, all the various manifestations of grace, the actions of God, what Jesus has done, all of it has never and will never do anything to change God—He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. He is perfect, holy, righteous, and eternal, there is nothing wrong with God and nothing in God needs to be fixed, updated, amended, changed, or reconciled to sinners.





We need to be fixed, updated, amended, changed, healed, cleansed, restored, and reconciled back to God. And that is the plan of salvation, God's plan to intervene in humanity to eradicate the infection of sin within us and restore His living law of love in our inmost being reconciling us back to at-one-ment with God.

## TUESDAY

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Why did Jesus have to become human? Why did God have to become one with us?

It is very straightforward and simple—it is reality—once Adam and Eve sinned the species human—all of whom are offspring, outgrowth, fruit of Adam and Eve are born with a terminal sin condition. The only way to save human sinners is to eliminate the sin condition from human beings. This requires action within the human being. The actions required are the following:

- Truth must be revealed and then accepted and believed to destroy the lies and restore fearful, distrusting, rebellious human hearts and minds back to trust in God. Only God Himself could fully and accurately reveal the truth about Himself. If an angel would have come as a human instead of God we would learn about angels, and we would learn that God was willing to sacrifice angels to protect Himself. So step one as to why Jesus became human is because it was the only way God could reveal to humans (and to the onlooking universe Colossians 1:18-20) the truth about Himself.
- But having been restored to trust by accepting the truth that Jesus revealed, doesn't remove the infection the carnal nature from the species human. The salvation of humanity, in addition to defeating the lies and restoring trust, requires a new sinless, perfect, mature, and righteous character/nature. Character cannot be created, it must be developed by the exercise of free choice of the sapient being. Jesus had to become human, and use only His human abilities—the power to think, to choose, to exercise faith in His Father, to love, in order to confront the temptations of sin and eliminate the death causing principle and restore the life causing principle into humanity, and thus save the species created in Eden.
- These two actions, revealing the truth and developing a mature, perfect, sinless human character by the exercise of human abilities destroys the devil's power





(Hebrews 2:14), destroys the sympathy for Satan with any heavenly angels who knew him and had questions (Colossians 1:18-20), destroys death itself and brings life and immortality to light (2Tim 1:10), destroys the carnal nature and replaced it with a sinless righteous human nature (1 John 3:8).

- When we receive the truth, metaphorically the bread or flesh, we are won back to trust and open our hearts to God and receive the wine/blood, the life is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11), we receive the life of Christ, the new heart, right spirit, with new righteous motives, love for God and others, and then as we choose to live out those new desires we receive power to succeed and it is no longer our old sinful, fear-ridden, selfish selves that live, but Christ lives in us, we are new creations, partaking of the divine nature, and having the mind of Christ. As we continue to choose, in faith, to live out God's principles we are sealed by the Holy Spirit into our devotion, loyalty, trust of God and nothing will shake us from it.

## WEDNESDAY

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Read first paragraph,

- Jesus' life and ministry were God's ultimate revelation. In about three years God was able to reveal more about who He was and what His mission was all about than in all He had done through any other method in previous generations. Christ was the perfect "image of the invisible God," the One in whom "all the fullness should dwell, . . . having made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col. 1:15, 19, 20, NKJV). In Christ, the missionary nature of God was completely made known. Jesus Himself revealed His mission, saying, "the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10, NKJV). (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 10).

What is the peace that Jesus made through the blood of His cross? How would you explain it? Do you hear it as doing something to God, or as I just described fixing the damage that sin caused to God's creation?

Read the last paragraph,



- Christ's death was part of the reconciliation process, not the end of it. Through His resurrection, Jesus conquered death and received " 'all authority . . . in heaven and on earth' " (Matt. 28:18, NKJV). Based on this reality, He then commissioned all of His followers to make disciples around the world, with an awesome promise: " 'I am with you always, even to the end of the age' " (Matt. 28:20, NKJV; emphasis supplied). (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 10).

I think we all agree that the plan of salvation did not end at the cross, that we have a work of evangelizing the world with the gospel, but then what did Jesus mean when at the cross he said, "It is finished"?

I encourage you to read the chapter It Is Finished in the book *The Desire of Ages*, it is one of the best chapters ever written by anyone on this subject. And I want us to unpack some of this chapter together:

- Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. He **had revealed himself as a murderer**. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings... The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken. (The Desire of Ages 761.2) [One of the things that Christ finished at the cross was providing the evidence of who is the source of death, who was responsible for Christ's death, who is the murderer, destroyer, and the truth of what happens when God stops using power to prevent death from occurring. The cross reveals who does what—God let Christ go—setting Jesus free to experience what Jesus freely chose, and that was to destroy sin and death. Therefore, at the cross God stopped using power, stepped back, let go, and severed His live-giving link with His Son, so that Jesus could complete Their joint mission. This reveals that death does not come out from God as an inflicted punishment. Further, at the cross Satan revealed that he is the one from whom death comes. As Hebrews 2:14 says Satan holds the power of death, but Christ destroys both Satan and his power of death and brings life and immortality to light. This truth was revealed at the cross, but not fully understood by finite beings. Yet sadly, most of Christianity, having believed the lie that God's law functions like human law, teach that God killed Jesus on the cross.]



Yet Satan was not then destroyed. The angels did not even then understand all that was involved in the great controversy. **The principles at stake were to be more fully revealed.** And for **the sake of man, Satan's existence must be continued.** Man as well as angels must see the contrast between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness. He must choose whom he will serve. (The Desire of Ages 761.3) [Despite the cross revealing the contrast between love and selfishness, between God's use of power and Satan's, the heavenly angels and humans still didn't fully understand the difference between the two. Why? Because one foundational lie had not been fully eliminated and that was the lie about God's law, note what the author says next.]

**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. When men broke the law of God, and defied His will, Satan exulted... (The Desire of Ages 761.4) [What kind of law requires the infliction of punishment? Imposed law, made up law, the kind of law created beings make. This was Satan's lie from the beginning and this lie continues to infect human hearts and minds and the church. Worshiping a beings whose law works like this means one is worshipping a creature and not the Creator. This is why we are called at this time in history to call people back to Creator worship, which requires we reject human imposed law and understand the reality of God as Creator and Sustainer that His law is design alw. The problem of salvation isn't legal, it is functional, the actual condition of hearts and minds, harmony or disharmony with God and the laws He built reality to operate upon.]

**But even as a sinner, man was in a different position from that of Satan.** [How? What was different? Why can the death of Jesus save human sinners but not Satan?] Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God's love. **Understanding the character of God,** knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. **This choice was final.** There was no more that God could do to save him. But man was **deceived;** his mind was darkened by Satan's sophistry. **The height and depth of the love of God he did not know. For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God.** (The Desire of Ages 761.5) [If the problem were a legal



problem and the solution is the payment of sinless blood of God's sin—then such a solution would be available to Satan and his fallen angels. But the problem isn't legal, and legal payments cannot solve it. The problem is reality, functional, the actual condition of hearts and minds. Satan's rejected the truth of God's character, methods, and design laws, and hardened within himself the preference for selfishness. But humanity was in a different position, humanity was tricked, deceived, and therefore there was hope for humanity. Where is humanity's hope? In being won back to trust by the revelation of the truth of God. There is hope in the truth of God's character, winning humans back to trust and offering them an alternative to selfishness, the truth, love, and liberty of God as manifested and restored into humanity by Jesus.]

Through Jesus, God's mercy was manifested to men; but mercy does not set aside justice. [What does this mean?] The law reveals the attributes of God's character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. **God did not change His law, [Why because it is perfect, and it is the protocols life is built to operate upon. We must be changed to harmonize with the law.]** but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man's redemption. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. (The Desire of Ages 762.1)

**The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character;** 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. (The Desire of Ages 762.2) [The law of God requires that we live in harmony with it, just like the law of respiration requires we breathe. And God doesn't change His law, He restores His living law in us through the works of Jesus.]

**By substituting human law for God's law, Satan will seek to control the world.** [What kind of laws do humans enact? When we teach God's law functions like human law, imposed rules requiring God to use power to punish



rule breakers and salvation is legal, we have substituted human law for God's law. We are worshiping a creature rather than the Creator.] This work is foretold in prophecy. Of the great apostate power which is the representative of Satan, it is declared, "He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand." Daniel 7:25. (The Desire of Ages 763.1)

**Men will surely set up their laws to counterwork the laws of God. They will seek to compel the consciences of others, and in their zeal to enforce these laws they will oppress their fellow men.** (The Desire of Ages 763.2) [This has certainly happened in the Dark Ages over issues of worship. But more recently it happened over COVID. And sadly many church leaders couldn't recognize the beastly methods of Satan that were employed, and they led the church to unite and practice these beastly methods on others. They didn't recognize it because they couldn't find an authority somewhere that tells them the answer because they believe the lie that God's law functions like human law.]

**The warfare against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time. Every man will be tested.** Obedience or disobedience is the question to be decided by the whole world. **All will be called to choose between the law of God and the laws of men. Here the dividing line will be drawn.** There will be but two classes. **Every character will be fully developed;** and all will show whether they have chosen the side of loyalty or that of rebellion. (The Desire of Ages 763.3) [The law we choose to apply to ourselves in how we treat others determines the type of character we develop.]

**Then the end will come. God will vindicate His law and deliver His people.** Satan and all who have joined him in rebellion **will be cut off.** Sin and sinners will perish, root and branch, (Malachi 4:1),—Satan the root, and his followers the branches. The word will be fulfilled to the prince of evil, "Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; ... I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.... Thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more." Then "the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be;" "they shall be as though they had not been." Ezekiel 28:6-19; Psalm 37:10; Obadiah 16. (The Desire of Ages 763.4)

**This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown.** [This is design law, the natural result of



cutting self off from God the source of life. It happens when God stops using power to hold their destructive choices at bay.] **God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, he separates from God, and thus cuts himself off from life.** He is “alienated from the life of God.” Christ says, “All they that hate Me love death.” Ephesians 4:18; Proverbs 8:36. God gives them existence for a time that they may develop their character and reveal their principles. This accomplished, **they receive the results of their own choice. By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them.** (The Desire of Ages 764.1) [But remember the righteous live eternally in that same glory—the glory of God is not harmful, it is life-giving. What is harmful is unremedied sin in the individual.]

**At the beginning of the great controversy, the angels did not understand this.** Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished; but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable result of sin. **A doubt of God's goodness would have remained in their minds as evil seed, to produce its deadly fruit of sin and woe.** (The Desire of Ages 764.2) [In order to eliminate sin from the universe God had to do more than eliminate Satan, He has to eliminate the lies, the fear, the doubts about God that infect hearts and minds. This is why Satan's existence has been continued, to manifest his own methods and principles and ultimately condemn and destroy himself.]

All of this was finished—the evidence and truth that brings it all to an end—at the cross.

## MONDAY

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Read first paragraph,

- In the Old Testament narrative, God continues to act according to His missionary nature in order to fulfill His purposes. For instance, after the Flood the people of Babel decided to gather in one place to build a city and a tower that would reach to the heavens. God intervened, confusing their language with the goal to scatter





them around the world (Gen. 11:1–9). He then enlarged His mission, calling Abram (who later became Abraham) to be a channel of His blessings to the whole world (Gen. 12:1–3). God’s promises to Abraham and his descendants were multifold, but one emerges above all. Several times God basically declared to them: “I will be [your] God.” “I will be with you.” “I am with you” (see Gen. 17:7, 8; Gen. 26:3, NKJV; Gen. 28:15, NKJV). (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God’s Mission My Mission p. 8).

Why did God confuse the languages at Babel?

Did God do this as punishment? Was God angry? Was He seeking to destroy? Or was this an act of love, an act of mercy, grace, and redemption?

The lesson then uses language that I find a little strange, in fact I am not sure what is meant, so I will ask you, what do you think they mean by: “He then enlarged His mission, calling Abram (who later became Abraham) to be a channel of His blessings to the whole world (Gen. 12:1–3).”

I don’t understand the word “enlarged” in this context. Wasn’t God’s mission to send Jesus as our Savior announced in Genesis 3:15?

And weren’t the following part of that mission to send Jesus, destroy sin, death, Satan, and save humanity:

- Barring the way to the Tree of Life?
- The animal sacrifices?
- The confrontation with Cain?
- The preaching of Noah for 120 years followed by the Flood
- The confusion of the languages and scattering of the people and, in my view, it was there that the different genetic racial differences were introduced to separate people into different groups—why? To prevent the world from uniting again in a total, global, worldwide rebellion against heaven, in order to give time for God’s mission, the plan of salvation, Jesus to come.

So, I don’t understand the word enlarged in this context—it is the carrying out what was already promised, and the Bible focus narrows. We no longer focus on the entire world, but only on Abraham’s family, which narrows to Isaac’s descendants, which narrows to





Jacob's which narrows eventually to the tribe of Judah—why? Because the entire Bible story is the coming Messiah, the plan of salvation, which is focused upon Jesus.

Let's be very clear about something—no human can be saved from sin at any from Adam and Eve all the way down to the last sinner saved at the end of time without Jesus. Jesus is the only means of salvation for every single human being. Human salvation required Jesus to become part of the human species, a real human being; it required He be tempted like us in every way; it required that He overcome every temptation and be sinless; it required that He develop a perfect mature human character; and that required Him to die to destroy the infection of fear and selfishness and to establish by action, by deed, by choice, by faith and trust in His Father the eternal law of love sealed into His human character; and having done this human salvation required Him to arise from the dead because He defeated and destroyed the cause of death and restored the law of life back into the species human. And thus Jesus becomes the connecting link, the only means whereby every other human, who is born dead in trespass and sin, can experience through their faith in Him a recreation of their inner person and be reborn with God's law of love, law of life, restored within them. Thus they are reconciled to God through faith in Jesus.

Does that mean that one has to place their faith in a Savior they call Jesus? What if they call Him Joshua, or Yoshua, or El-Shaadi, or Elohim, or Yahweh, or Yah, or any of a variety of other names?

What if someone does accept Jesus by that name as their Savior and is baptized into a Christian church and spends their life doing Christian mission—does that mean they are saved? We already quoted this earlier, but Jesus Himself said,

- “Not everyone who **says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’** will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 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!**’” (Matthew 7:21-23 NIV84).

Jesus is describing people who are calling Him Lord and doing all their works in His name, in other words, these people would identify themselves as Christians, but Jesus said He never knew them and they are evil doers.



How can this be?

What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? In other words, what does it mean to be truly saved?

What is the problem that sin caused that God's mission through Jesus is fixing?

Is the problem a legal problem or a problem of our actual condition?

If we replace God's design law with human imposed law, then the problem is misconstrued as a legal problem in which God is required by law and justice to inflict a legal death penalty, and salvation becomes some means to get that legal penalty paid. And people can claim legal salvation and the acceptance of the payment of Jesus' blood to pay their sin debt, go through ritual baptism, join a church, spend their lives in mission, but never know Jesus, never have their hearts renewed to be like Jesus.

The Bible does not teach that Jesus came to take away our punishment for sin. The Bible teaches that Jesus came to take away the sin of the world, to take away the cause of pain, suffering, and death and that cause is sin, not God. But Satan, the master deceiver has duped billions into believing God is the cause of inflicted pain, suffering, and death as punishment for sin.

So the promise to Abraham—what is that promise? Is it a different promise than given to Adam in Genesis 3:15? If it is the same promise, then is that promise restricted to the biological, the genetic, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

The promise to Abraham had two meanings—one that the genetic descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would be the biological branch of the human family tree through which Messiah would come. The land that was shown to Abraham would be given to them for them to carry out the purpose of being the repository of Scripture, the symbolic theater of the sanctuary, and being the avenue through whom Jesus would be born. This promise was given in Genesis 12:7.

- The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land” (Genesis 12 7).



But God was not sending Jesus to save only biological descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God was sending Jesus to save the entire world. And God was not promising Abraham's descendants only a narrow strip of land in the Middle East, He was telling Abraham that through the fulfillment of His promise to Adam of the promised seed of the woman, who would be born to one of Abraham's descendants, the entire human family would be saved and they will inherit the entire world. Just as Jesus said: "the meek will inherit the earth" not the "meek will inherit Palestine."

It is Abraham's descendant Jesus who sets up a kingdom that encompasses the entire world, the rock that destroys the image in Daniel 2, He reigns on a throne that will never be removed, and the New Jerusalem comes down from Heaven and God moves the throne of the universe to this planet.

This is the promise given to Abraham. Through God's constant mercy, grace, and discipline the biological descendants were able to barely succeed in being the avenue through which Jesus was born as a human 2000 years ago. That part of their calling and God's promise to give them that land to fulfill that part of their mission is complete. Now, what we are waiting for God to fulfill is the larger, final, aspect of His promise, for Jesus to come again and to purify the earth from all sin and give the entire planet to the saved.

Thus the Bible teaches that

- If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:29 NET).

To be a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in salvation is not about biology—it is about experiencing what they did:

- A descendant of Abraham has the saving faith that Abraham had and thus their heart is set right or justified with God from the natural state of distrust to trust in that trust they
- Become a descendant of Isaac as they experience the miracle of rebirth—Isaac was the miracle birth child and we are his descendant when we are reborn through the miracle of God's divine power working in us and
- We become a descendant of Jacob when in our faith relationship with Jesus, with our new reborn heart, we yoke up with Jesus and wrestle against our own fears



and selfishness to be an overcomer—thus we get a new name that Jesus writes on our foreheads, just as Jacob’s name was changed from deceiver, to Israel—one who with God overcomes.

And the writer of Hebrews agrees with our assessment. Hebrews tells us that the faithful of God in Bible times—Abel, Enoch, Noah, along with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who lived “in the promised land” (Hebrews 11:9)—“did not receive the things promised” (Hebrews 11:13), that they were “looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (Hebrews 11:10). “All of these people” of faith “did not receive the things promised; they saw them and welcomed them from a distance. ... They were longing for a better country—a heavenly one” (Hebrews 11:13, 16).

The Bible says that “all of these people” did not receive the things promised; note who is included on that list—Enoch, who was taken to heaven! Enoch, who has already received eternal life, a glorified body, who currently lives in heaven with Jesus, surely he has received the promise, hasn’t he? Not in its complete and fullest sense. What was Abraham promised? That his spiritual descendants would inherit the earth. This promise will not be realized until Jesus comes again, all sin and sinners are eliminated, the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven, and the earth is made new to be the home of the righteous. Then the promise will be realized and we, who have faith like Abraham, will receive our inheritance of a goodly land, a beautiful home, perfect and flawless that God intended Adam and Eve to possess. It is true that the meek will inherit the earth, for what God has promised He will fulfill.

In the last paragraph, the lesson asks, “What was one of the main purposes of the Old Testament sanctuary?”

What do you think?

The lesson has a quote from one of the founders of the SDA church, which reflects the SDA church’s position:

- “The sacrificial offerings, and the priesthood of the Jewish system, were instituted to represent the death and mediatorial work of Christ. All those ceremonies had no meaning, and no virtue, only as they related to Christ.”—Ellen G. White, *Advent Review and Herald of the Sabbath*, December 17, 1872.



Do you agree with this? Is there Biblical evidence to support this position?

- “The gifts and sacrifices being offered were **not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper**. They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order... But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, because **it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins**. (Hebrews 9:9,10, 10:3,4).

But this was not something new to the New Testament writers, God told them this all through the Old Testament:

- “The multitude of your sacrifices— what are they to me?” says the Lord. “I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have **no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats**... wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.” (Isaiah 1:11,16,17)
- “I want your constant love, **not your animal sacrifices**. I would rather have my people know me than burn offerings to me.” (Hosea 6:6)

So, the position that the OT sanctuary was only theater, a teaching tool, object lesson, ceremony with no saving value in the rituals is biblical.

However, not all Christians see it this way, some believe that in Old Testament times it was the sacrifices of animals and animal blood that took care of the sin problem, despite the texts I read.

Here is a quote from a theology professor heard on Christian radio:

- In the Old Testament, the death of an animal was required to take care of the human sin problem and now we have not the death of an animal, but of the very Son of God, who dies for us. And so his loss of blood is the thing whereby He succumbed on our behalf. (Chris Fabry Live Radio Show March 23, 2016, Moody Broadcasting).

The reason this idea exists is that many good Christian people fail to recognize the Great Controversy perspective, that there is only one sin problem and only one solution



for it, and the entire Bible is teaching the exact same truth—the truth about God, the truth about sin, the truth about the purpose of the creation of humankind and the fall, the truth about God’s design law and heavenly government, the truth about Jesus as our Savior as the only avenue for salvation for any human being. All the parts of the Bible teach the same eternal truths and must be harmonized together in order to understand correctly these truths.

Sadly, much of Christianity has broken the Bible into various parts and believe that salvation had other avenues than Jesus in Old Testament times.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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### **JOIN DR. JENNINGS TREATMENT TEAM**

Dr. Jennings is now in his new position as Medical Director of Honey Lake Clinic in Greenville, Florida. See their website at <https://www.honeylake.clinic/>

Honey Lake Clinic is the only Christ-centered residential psychiatric treatment program in the country. We have two campuses—adult and female adolescent (Dr. Jennings is Medical Director of the Adult Campus). The program takes a holistic approach to treatment integrating the best of modern neuroscience with biblical principles (design laws) to bring healing to mind, body, soul, and spirit.

As you likely know, the need for such whole-person Christian mental health care is huge and therefore we are expanding our services to be able to treat more people. But in order to do that, **we need more staff**—staff who are both professionally competent and licensed but who are also committed Christians who have the vision to integrate Christ and Christian principles into treating the whole person.

If you are interested in becoming part of the treatment team at Honey Lake Clinic and working with Dr. Jennings, see the jobs posted below and contact Honey Lake for more details. (LCSWs should also apply). If you are interested in any of the positions below email [HR@honeylakeclinic.com](mailto:HR@honeylakeclinic.com)

#### **Psychiatry Mental Health Nurse Practitioner- Advance Practice Nurse Practitioner**

- Able to empathically and compassionately interview patients presenting with a MH issue using the organization’s comprehensive psychiatric evaluation





- Able to elicit medical histories and assess for medical causes of the MH issues or for comorbid medical issues that are a result of the MH disorder and/or exacerbate the MH disorder
- Utilization of interview, assessment and diagnostics in comprehensive treatment of dual diagnosis patients
- Able to assess for level of detox and use standard CIWA and COWS for withdrawal severity and then initiate detox treatment
- Able to prescribe initial psychiatric and detox medications, monitor and document results and side effects, and perform follow-up medication management within accepted standard of care guidelines.
- Familiarity with ASAM or LOCUS for assignment of levels of care

### **Adult Program Clinical Director**

- Masters in mental health counseling, psychology or social work required. Other graduate degrees that lead to MHC, MSW or MFT licensure are acceptable.
- Florida Licensure (LMHC, LCSW or LMFT) active and in good standing, is required.
- Experience providing therapy to adults with mental health and substance diagnoses 2 years post-licensure is required.
- Supervisory experience, minimum of 2 years is required, post-licensure is preferred.
- Experience in Clinical Supervision and Program Management, 2 years post-licensure is preferred.

### **Licensed Therapist**

- Masters in mental health counseling, psychology or social work required. Other graduate degrees that lead to MHC, MSW or MFT licensure are acceptable.
- Licensure is required
- EMDR with other trauma modalities is preferred.
- Experience with adults with mental health and/or substance diagnoses is preferred.

### **Individual Therapist- Registered Intern**

- Masters in mental health counseling, psychology or social work required. Other graduate degrees that lead to MHC, MSW or MFT licensure are acceptable.
- EMDR with other trauma modalities is preferred.
- Experience with adults with mental health and/or substance diagnoses is preferred.

The God Shaped Heart, has just been released in German in Germany, *Herz voll Gott*, published by the Adventist publishing house in Germany.

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