



## 2024 Q1 Psalms Lesson

### 3 The Lord Reigns

by Tim Jennings

#### SABBATH and MONDAY

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We are starting with Sabbath and Monday together because the title for the week and the title for Monday are the same, “The Lord Reigns”

The lesson points us to Psalm 93 for our memory text. Let’s read the entire five verses, first from the NIV and then from the Remedy:

- The LORD reigns, he is robed in majesty;  
the LORD is robed in majesty  
and is armed with strength.  
The world is firmly established;  
it cannot be moved.  
2 Your throne was established long ago;  
you are from all eternity.  
3 The seas have lifted up, O LORD,  
the seas have lifted up their voice;  
the seas have lifted up their pounding waves.  
4 Mightier than the thunder of the great waters,  
mightier than the breakers of the sea—  
the LORD on high is mighty.  
5 Your statutes stand firm;  
holiness adorns your house  
for endless days, O LORD. (Psalm 93:1-5 NIV84)

Don’t you love this psalm? What do you understand the meaning to be? Is it simply and only a testimony to the creatorship, eternal essence, and infinite power of God? Or is this a psalm inspired by the Holy Spirit in the context of the universal war over God’s trustworthiness and is it intended to inspire us with eternal truths about God in that context?

In other words, is there deeper meaning contained in this psalm that goes beyond the obvious that God is Creator, infinite, eternal, and powerful?

Consider the Remedy paraphrase:

- The Lord reigns supreme, covered in majesty;  
the Lord is covered in majesty — the majesty of infinite love  
secured and bound by the strength of infinite truth.

The world is established as the showcase of your methods of love;  
your design laws for life cannot be changed.  
2 Your rulership was established long ago when you built all reality;  
you created time and existed before time began.  
3 Seas of selfish beings have risen up, O Lord,  
the seas of the selfish have raised their voices in opposition to your rule;  
the seas of the selfish have pounded against your kingdom of truth and love.  
4 Love is mightier than the thundering flood of selfishness;  
truth is mightier than the stormy seas of lies and deceit —  
the Lord, Creator God on high, is mighty!  
5 Your design protocols for life can never be changed;  
holiness and healthiness — perfection in all things — adorn your house  
for all eternity, O Lord. (Psalm 93:1-5 REM)

This paraphrase magnifies a certain meaning, but is that meaning a violation of the text? In other words, when you read the more conservative text is this meaning one possible interpretation? And are there Bible texts that support such interpretations—like the seas representing people (Rev 17:15)? And in the context of the Great Controversy, what is the most likely truth the Holy Spirit wants people to know—simply and only that God is powerful—or that God is not only powerful but trustworthy? Don't the devils believe God is powerful and it scares them?

Read the first paragraph,

- The Psalms unswervingly uphold the foundational belief in God's sovereign reign. The Lord created and sustains everything that He had created. He is the Sovereign King over the whole world, and He rules the world with justice and righteousness. His laws and statutes are good and bring life to those who keep them. The Lord is a just Judge who ensures that the world remains well ordered, and He does so by rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked, but in His time, not ours. (Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2024, Psalms p. 20).

What do you understand God's "sovereign reign" to be? What does it mean? How is God sovereign?

The question of God's sovereignty and what it entails has generated debate throughout Christianity history, yet there is a clear and understandable, truthful, factual, and testable answer—but what is the first question we must answer in order to answer other questions?

How do we understand God's law functions? If we understand God's law functions like human law and government, then sovereignty becomes Calvinistic, God's sovereignty is taught to be first His **right** to control everything, and second His **use of power** to control everything. Therefore, it is taught that while evil is still evil, it is good for evil to have happened because it couldn't have happened except God, in His sovereignty, chose for it to happen.

Those who accept the lie that God's law functions like human law, will describe God's sovereignty in ways like this: "the right to exercise his ruling power over his creation." Or "God is in control of all things" or "God controls everything that happens."

The question that arises with such assertions about God's sovereignty is one of human freewill, do we have freewill, or does God's sovereignty determine our decisions for us? Are we predestined by God to do evil and good things because He is in control or is God's control limited by our freewill?

What do you think would happen if you were counseling a rape victim, or someone whose family was kidnapped and killed by terrorists, and you said to them, "Don't worry, God is in control"?

Would such a statement likely be therapeutic, healing, helpful for them to hear? Would saying those words most likely enlighten the individual to eternal truths and lead them to trust God more, or might those words put barriers between that person and God?

Would it be true or false to say to the rape victim, "God is in control"?

- If we say it's true, what does that say to the rape victim about her rape and about God?
  - Did God instigate the rape?
  - Did God motivate, control, and inspire the rapist to rape them?
  - Did God want the person to be raped?
  - If God is in control and chose for the rapist to rape then does that mean rape just and good?
  - If we conclude that rape is evil but God is in control and still caused the rape then does God support, choose, and cause evil; is God the source of evil?
  - And how could anyone ever trust such a god?
  
- If we tell the rape victim that God is not in control, are we speaking truthfully?
  - Or are we misrepresenting God in some way?
  - Are we limiting God's power and sovereignty?
  - Do we enhance or undermine faith in God if we teach that God doesn't have control over His creation?
  - Is a god with limited control merely like the many regional pagan gods a being with limited power and susceptible to forces beyond its control?
  - Would it bring healing to the rape victim to believe God is not in control?
  - Would they be able to move forward in this sinful world with less anxiety if they believe in a god who is limited in their ability to protect and save because they have limited control?

What is the root to all of these apparent problems and what will cause all of these problems to evaporate? The cause of all of this confusion, comes from Satan the author of confusion, and is his lie that God's law is imposed law. To clear up the confusion one only needs to reject the lie and embrace the truth that God's law is design law.

It is the use of the lie that God's law is imposed and trying to answer these questions through that lawless that directly causes all the confusion and conflicts described above, but as soon as we return to design law all the problems disappear.

God's laws are the protocols upon which reality is built to operate, such as the laws of physics, gravity, law of love, truth, worship, liberty, exertion, laws of health, and so many more. It is how reality works.

Thus, **God is in control of what God controls** — and **God controls Himself and all His laws. He sustains reality**; He keeps the universe running upon the protocols and laws He established. **And one of those laws is the law of liberty**, which grants real freedom to sapient beings. Why? Because God is love and love only exists in an atmosphere of freedom.

Robots cannot choose and robots cannot love and if God acted to restrict freedom to choose, He would destroy love. Understanding design law, including the law of liberty, clears up apparent contradictions—like the apparent contradictions in Scripture where it teaches all of the following:

- God hardened Pharaoh's heart (Exodus 4:21; 7:3)
- Pharaoh hardened his own heart (Exodus 8:15, 32).
- Pharaoh's heart became hard or was hardened (Exodus 7:22)

Are all three statements true? If we have the imposed law view, then someone is responsible, someone makes it happen the way it does, and God as supreme is the one who does it, thus Pharaoh didn't have a choice, God used him like a pawn and forced a hard heart upon Pharaoh. This is a lie, an untruth, a false understanding that occurs when we believe God's law functions like human law.

When we return to design law, how reality works, we understand exactly how all three statements of Scripture are true and **the fact the Bible says it in all three ways is proof, evidence, that the design law understanding of God's law** is the right understanding.

But here is how it works. What actually hardens a heart? The choice to reject love and truth and act upon fear, selfishness and lies. In other words, sin itself hardens the heart.

Then how did God harden Pharaoh's heart? By presenting the truth and leaving Pharaoh free to accept or reject it. The accepting or rejecting causes the end result — healing or hardening. The act of choosing to accept or reject truth; to embrace love or embrace selfishness; to steal, lie, cheat, or be honest, truthful and loyal, changes the person who makes the choice. Without the truth presented and the freedom to reject it, Pharaoh's heart would not have become as hardened. Thus, God hardened Pharaoh's heart through the laws of truth and freedom; He presented truth and left the ruler free. God controlled Himself and His laws, but Pharaoh exercised his own will and controlled his own choice, operating upon the law of liberty God was sustaining, and in choosing to reject the truth, he hardened his own heart. This is how reality works and how God is in control.

One might ask however, if God foreknew that Pharaoh would reject the truth, and this would result in hardening of Pharaoh's heart, why did God do it? Because of reality—Pharaoh, like every human born since Adam's sin, was born in sin and conceived in iniquity (Ps 51:5). He had the same terminal sin condition as every other human and needed the same remedy from God. If God did not present the truth to Pharaoh then Pharaoh would have had no opportunity to be saved from sin, and what would it say about God if God withheld saving truth? So God presents the truth because He is love, and He

loved Pharaoh and wanted Pharaoh to come to salvation, but Pharaoh chose to reject it and hardened his own heart.

So, what do we say to the rape victim?

If the person is a believer and ready for a discussion about such things, we tell them that God is love and love only exists in freedom—and as the sovereign Creator, He could have made us all robots, beings programmed to act the way He chooses—but such beings only simulate life, they are not alive, they cannot love, create, develop, hope, be friends. God created human beings in His image, to be like God in our entire being—to love, to create, to be loyal, to develop friendships, especially friendship with God. But all of this requires real and genuine freedom, thus one of God’s laws is the law of liberty and God sustains this law and leaves all His intelligent creatures free to choose for themselves. And when Lucifer chose rebellion and evil, God did not use power to destroy him, but left him free and countered that assault with truth and love and ultimately sent Jesus to take up the responsibility of eliminating the damage and restoring love and trust—of healing all the damage. God is not responsible for evil, He is responsible for love and freedom, and He takes responsibility to heal and restore all who love and trust Him.

But what do we do with texts like this one?

- See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand. (Deuteronomy 32:39 NIV84).

How do we understand this? Didn’t I just last week read the following quote from the Adventist Review December 8, 2023:

- “To spare us, God poured out His wrath against the violation of His law (sin), not on the violators of His law (sinners) but on the sinless Jesus, the only way that God could “be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Rom. 3:26). **In short, rather than killing us for violating His law, the Father killed Jesus instead. ... Or, to put it crudely, the Father killed Jesus so that He wouldn’t have to kill us**” (emphasis mine). (Goldstein, C. “Law, Freedom, Love.” Adventist Review online edition, Dec 8, 2023, [https://adventistreview.org/cliffs-edge/law-freedom-love/?fbclid=IwAR3wAGrpMo-HQQi2KFAIHxfD47q5Aam6lZ6yJTNk-5FH7QZr66b8h\\_3CqX0](https://adventistreview.org/cliffs-edge/law-freedom-love/?fbclid=IwAR3wAGrpMo-HQQi2KFAIHxfD47q5Aam6lZ6yJTNk-5FH7QZr66b8h_3CqX0) )

And then quoted Hebrews 2:14

- 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 NIV84).

And then I stated that the author attributes to God Satan’s power, the power of death. Didn’t I do that last week?

But now we read,

- See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand. (Deuteronomy 32:39 NIV84).

So, was I wrong last week? Is God truly the author of death, the source of death, the one who wields the power of death? We cannot ignore this text in Deuteronomy, so how do we understand it?

As we do with all Scripture, we must place it in the setting of the rest of Scripture, the entirety of the inspired record, and the setting of the Great Controversy and not take one text by itself to make a conclusion. And with just a little more Bible searching we find this text:

- The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up. (1 Samuel 2:6 NIV84).

Ah, and the light goes on. We see an expansion through Hebrew parallelism where the second phrase expands on the first phrase, and what do we learn? That God is speaking of sometimes putting people into the first death experience but not the second death experience, and God will raise people from the first death experience.

In Scripture the word “death” is applied to two very different and distinct states of being.

- First death, which the Bible describes as a sleep death in which only the body dies, but the soul, the individuality sleeps, like a computer whose battery dies sleeps, and from which there is a resurrection. First death is not the end of life, it is a pause in one’s life—the life continues at the resurrection.
- Second death, is when both body and soul are destroyed. And the second death is the death that is the wages of sin, the death that occurs when one is completely and permanently cut off from God, the source of life and from which there is no resurrection—it is the end of one’s life for all eternity.

Now which of these two deaths does the Deuteronomy and 1 Samuel texts attribute to God controlling? The first death, the sleep death, which is not the wages of sin death. It is an artificial state of suspended animation, i.e. asleep, that is permitted by God’s grace to limit the destructiveness of sin and rebellion and to allow for the plan of salvation to be carried out. If not for God’s grace there would be no first death, only second death. Thus the Bible rightly tells us that God is in control of the sleep death. God in many places, put people to sleep, but God will also wake them up. Going to sleep is not death, it is suspension of life, it is a time out from living, a sleep.

But the second death is the eternal cessation of life and that is what choosing Satan and his ways cause. As the Bible says, “those who sow to the carnal nature reap destruction” (Galatians 6:8) and “sin when full grown brings forth death” (James 1:15). Eternal death, the wages of sin death does not come out from God, it comes out from sin, from breaking away from God and His design laws for life.

So, was I wrong last week when I pointed out that the Review article attributed to God the power of death and that power is Satan's power? No, I stand by what I said, it is the truth, reality. God is the source of life, Satan and sin sever our connection with God and life and is the cause of death. Death does not come out from God.

Or what about this text:

I received an email asking how we understand:

- I form the light, and **create darkness**: I make peace, and **create evil**: I the LORD do all these things.” (Isaiah 45:7 KJV emphasis mine).

However, this is not the only possible translation, and the translation informs us of the biases of the translator—perhaps having an imperial law understanding of Sovereignty.

Henry Wright, in his book, *A More Excellent Way*, clarifies this verse:

- Some say God created evil because of Isaiah 45:7

“I form the light, and create the darkness. I make peace and create evil: I the LORD do all these things. Isaiah 45:7”

In the *Strong's Concordance*, the Hebrew word for create, under #1254 is *bara*. It is the same word used when God created. But the second meaning for the Hebrew word create is “*to break down, tear down, cut down like wood.*”

Now let's read the Scripture again with the Strong's definition in it.

I form the light, and I tear down and destroy darkness. I make peace and tear down and cut down like wood everything that is evil. I am the author of the destruction of evil” (*A More Excellent Way To Be in Health* by Henry W. Wright, p. 130. emphasis mine)

Which translation do you think is the more accurate one?

Do you see how a design law understanding brings everything into harmony?

In the first paragraph in Sabbath's lesson and third paragraph in Monday's lesson the author uses the language that God's reign is established in both justice and righteousness.

What does this mean?

This is evidence of the infection of imposed law into our theology. Sentences like this are evidence of the Romanization of Christianity, the belief in the lie that God's law functions like human law.

In the Bible there is no word “justice” or “justification” or “righteousness.” These are English words. And “justice, justify, justification” all come from Latin roots, which is the basis of much of our legal language—i.e. Latin = Roman, the Romanization of Christianity.

In the Greek New Testament there is only one root word for all of these terms. If you look up these words in any lexicon this is what you will find:

- Just is δίκαιος [dikaios /dik·ah·yos/]
- Righteous is δίκαιος [dikaios /dik·ah·yos/]
- Justifies and Justify is δικαίω [dikaioo /dik·ah·yo·o/]
- “Be righteous” is δικαίω [dikaioo /dik·ah·yo·o/]
- Justice is δικαιοσύνη [dikaiosune /dik·ah·yos·oo·nay/]
- Righteousness is δικαιοσύνη [dikaiosune /dik·ah·yos·oo·nay/]

If the authors understood design law and did not infect our theology with Romanism, they would never separate justice and righteousness—because these two terms are always the exact same thing.

When your child disobeys your clear warning to never take medicine from the medicine cabinet and overdoses on an entire bottle of some pharmaceutical, and you see them seizing and dying from their action—what is the right thing for you to do? What is the just thing for you to do? If you do what is just do you take out your belt and beat them? Do you tell them, “Well I could let you die from the consequences of your action, but justice demands that I pour gas on you and burn you as long as you deserve. Now, I would prefer to just let you die, you see, but I am a just parent and I am required to enforce my rules so, as much as it grieves me, I must torture and kill you.”

Or, does justice seek to save and restore, to heal? And isn’t that the right thing?

And thus we read Romans 3:23-26 from the NIV, which leans strongly in the Romanized view of penal legal language and from the GNT which is less so, and from the Remedy:

- For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. (Romans 3:23-26 NIV84).
- Everyone has sinned and is far away from God’s saving presence. But by the free gift of God’s grace all are put right with him through Christ Jesus, who sets them free. God offered him, so that by his blood he should become the means by which people’s sins are forgiven through their faith in him. God did this in order to demonstrate that he is righteous. In the past he was patient and overlooked people’s sins; but in the present time he deals with their sins, in order to



demonstrate his righteousness. In this way God shows that he himself is righteous and that he puts right everyone who believes in Jesus. (Romans 3:23-26 GNT)

- For all humanity is infected with the same disease — of distrust, fear and selfishness — and is deformed in character and falls far short of God's glorious ideal for humanity. Yet all who are willing are healed freely by God's gracious Remedy which has been provided by Jesus Christ. God presented Jesus as the way and the means of restoration. Now, through the trust established by the evidence of God's character revealed when Christ died, we may partake of the Remedy procured by Christ. God did this to demonstrate that he is right and good — because in his forbearance he suspended, for a time, the ultimate consequence of us being out of harmony with his design for life — yet he has been falsely accused of being unfair. He did it to demonstrate at the present time how right and good he is, so that he would also be seen as being right when he heals those who trust in Jesus. (Romans 3:23-26 REM)

## **SUNDAY**

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What do you think of title “The Lord Has Made Us”?

Is this referring to our individual biological existence?

Is it referring to a collective us—the Lord made the human species, the Lord made Israel a nation; the Lord made the SDA church into a worldwide organization?

God is the Creator—no question about it. He spoke all things into existence, space, time, matter, energy, and life. All living things were created by Him, including humanity. And I believe God created Adam from the dirt of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and Adam became a living being. And I believe God created Eve from tissue taken from Adam.

So both Adam and Eve were created directly by God, by divine action to specifically bring them into existence as living beings.

And I believe God, sometime later, took divine action to bring Jesus into the world as our Savior, to cause Mary to become pregnant and give birth to Jesus a blend of our humanity and His divinity.

And all three of these beings—Adam, Eve, and Jesus when God completed His action to bring them into human existence were sinless.

What about you and me, did any of us, as individuals, come into the world by a direct act from God to create a sinless being?

How did we come into the world?

God gave Adam and Eve a godlike ability, the ability to create beings in *their* image. He created human beings with the ability to make freewill choices and those choices will develop and change us. As we develop and change, either for good or evil, we make changes in our being, epigenetic changes

in how our DNA is expressed, and then when we procreate we pass along to our offspring attributes of ourselves. This is well documented and proven scientific fact, as the Bible says, the sins pass down three and four generations.

All of this ability to procreate is only possible because of God's creation, His design, the delegated and endowed ability to procreate, and God's ongoing sustaining of life and the laws upon which life exists and operates. In other words, having children is only possible because of God's original creation and His ongoing sustaining of the laws that govern life and health.

However, does that mean that God acts with divine power to create each of us as we are? Does God create defective, sinful beings? No, God creates sinless beings. That is why the Bible teaches we were all in Adam when Adam sinned and that we are born in sin, conceived in iniquity.

The reason I am here as the unique person I am is not because God chose to use divine power in special creation from heaven to create me as a unique being, but because my mother and father chose to use the delegated abilities God invested in humanity to have a child. And had my mother and father chosen to skip the one month in which I was conceived and had a child conceived the next month, their second child wouldn't be me but one of my siblings.

Do you agree or disagree with this? What are the implications? Do we understand that God does not create sickness, defects, sinners, but that His creation has been damaged by sin and sickness, defects, and sinners are born because God continues to sustain His creation and give us freedom in harmony with His character and laws of love and liberty? And God is working to eliminate all sin, sickness, and defects from His creation and restore us to perfection?

In the fourth paragraph the lesson states,

- “Only the Creator has the power to bless and cause His people to increase, and thus, He is the only One worthy of their worship and trust.” (Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2024, Psalms p. 21).

What do we understand this to mean? Does it mean that all births are God's will, God using power to create new humans? So when men rape women and they get pregnant was that an act of God? Or when that happens do we see that human beings are abusing the abilities and powers God has given them?

## **TUESDAY**

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The title for the lesson is God is Judge, when you hear this title what thoughts, images, feelings, beliefs come to mind?

Do you think of images like these?



Or do you instead, when you think of God as judge think of these?



Consider both places, the courtroom and the hospital:

- Do people get examined and have things about themselves revealed in both places—sometimes things they prefer to keep hidden?
- Are judgments made in both places?
- Are verdicts given in both places?
- Are decisions made by others that impact the one being examined in both places?
- Are decrees or findings made by the examining authority in both places?

- Then are the same things happening to the one being examined in both places?
- What is the difference? The law which is being followed!

In the first setting—the courtroom—the law being followed and applied is worldly, imposed, made up, arbitrary rules that created beings make and which require judicial oversight and external enforcement.

In the second setting—the hospital—the law being followed and applied is God’s law, design law, the laws of health, the laws that the Creator built reality to operate upon and that life requires harmony with, thus the sick one requires healing, restoration, lest they die from their terminal condition.

Which judgment do you think represents the truth about God’s government?

The judicial model, the penal legal salvation model, is a lie, it is based on accepting Satan’s lie that God’s law functions like human law.

The lesson points our attention to Psalm 75, let’s read verses 2-8 in the GNB and the Remedy, and I want you to notice how the two laws come out in the translations:

- “I have set a time for judgement,” says God,  
“and I will judge with fairness.  
3 Though every living creature tremble  
and the earth itself be shaken,  
I will keep its foundations firm.  
4 I tell the wicked not to be arrogant;  
5 I tell them to stop their boasting.”  
6 Judgement does not come from the east or from the west,  
from the north or from the south;  
7 it is God who is the judge,  
condemning some and acquitting others.  
8 The LORD holds a cup in his hand,  
filled with the strong wine of his anger.  
He pours it out, and all the wicked drink it;  
they drink it down to the last drop. (Psalm 75:2-8 NIV84).

What do you hear? Which law does this sound like?

- God says, "When the time is right, I will unite with my people and govern them uprightly.  
3When the earth and all its selfish inhabitants slowly decay,  
it is I who holds the cure — the foundational design for life.  
4To the arrogant I say, ‘Stop bragging about yourselves — you have no remedy,’ and to the  
wicked, ‘Do not blow your own horn of self-exaltation.  
5Do not trumpet your own spiritual health, trying to exalt yourselves;  
do not be proud, with heads held high and necks unwilling to bend in humility and accept  
treatment.’"

6The exaltation and restoration of humanity does not come from anywhere on earth — east or west, north or south.

7It is the Creator God who governs! The proudly-selfish die, while the humbly-righteous live.

8In the hand of the Lord is a cup filled with the unfermented wine of absolute truth and love; he pours it out, and all the selfish of the earth drink down the truth of their true condition, bitterly swallowing every evil and corrupt fact they have thus far denied. (Psalm 75: 2-8 REM)

So, why do you think the boasting of wicked is in vain? It would be like:

- declaring that people who jumps off the Empire State Building live longer than those who takes the elevator down?
- someone claiming that cigarettes improve their lung function?
- putting a screen door on a submarine?
- declaring a man can become a woman or a woman can become a man?

But do you understand why these illogical declarations like declaring a man can become a woman has happened? It is because people believe that human law systems are the way reality works, made up rules determine right and wrong, and made up rules can be changed. Thus, if reality is determined by made up rules, then if we change the rules, then we change reality.

This is what happens when we teach God's law functions like human law, we teach lies about God, lies about reality, lies about right and wrong, lies about judgment and justice.

I recently read about a *global* study of 15-year-olds that tested their reading comprehension and found that 91 percent of them could not tell the difference between fact and opinion! <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/a9b5930a-en.pdf?expires=1704112635&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=EFFF5DF3ED7066C7FAF93D58F06D0FC3>

What happens when we substitute opinion for facts, for truth? We end up doing irrational and destructive things like walking around with a mask on our face believing it somehow can stop the spread of a virus, or take an experimental injection with no evidence of long term safety because the people in authority declared it is safe, or we believe that a man can become a woman etc.

We must lead people to objective reality and the God of reality and we do that by rejecting the Romanized view of Christianity with its made up laws and satanic god who is the source of inflicted torture and death.

Do you have any questions about judgment? –well turn to Wednesday and the first question at the top...

## **WEDNESDAY**

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Read the question at the top of the day's lesson:

- The theme of God’s judgment prompts a significant question: How can God’s people have peace with God and assurance of salvation at the time of judgment? (Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2024, Psalms p. 24).

This is an incredible question—what is implied by the question? Doesn’t the question imply that God has something against us, that God needs something done to Him so that He won’t judge and punish us?

Jesus taught us that from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks—people reveal what they think and believe by how they live and what they say. The lesson authors and editors reveal that they believe God’s law functions like human law—I don’t judge their motives. In fact, I view them like I do Saul of Tarsus before the Damascus road—zealous for God but ignorant of the truth. Saul of Tarsus thought he was serving God when in fact He was opposing God. I pray for those in leadership who are like Saul, I pray that God will give them the experience they need in order for them to reject the imposed law view and embrace design law.

So, how can people have peace with God and assurance of salvation in the judgment—by being healed, trusting God and receiving from the Holy Spirit a new heart and right spirit, by being reborn, by being recreated, by having God’s living design law of love and truth written upon our hearts and minds so that we are sealed, so settled into the truth both intellectually and spiritually that we cannot be moved. So that in God’s examining room God finds within each person Jesus living there (Gal 2:20).

Read the first paragraph,

- God’s people are secure because the Lord placed His dwelling place in Zion (Ps. 76:1, 2) and established His everlasting covenant with them as His treasured possession (Ps. 94:14, Ps. 105:8–10). God does not simply promise not to reject His covenantal people—He actively works to keep them secure in Him. He forgives their sins (Ps. 103:3); He instructs, blesses, and strengthens His people (Ps. 25:8–11, Ps. 29:11, Ps. 105:24). God’s judgments are given to turn the people to righteousness and to demonstrate that God cares for them (Ps. 94:8–15). (Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2024, Psalms p. 24).

Hmmm....I guess it depends on the meaning we attach to the words, but this is certainly not clear and in fact gives much opportunity for error, so let’s unpack it.

- “God’s people are secure because the Lord placed His dwelling place in Zion (Ps. 76:1, 2) and established His everlasting covenant with them as His treasured possession (Ps. 94:14, Ps. 105:8–10).”
  - What do we mean by “His dwelling place in Zion?” If we mean the building built by human hands and destroyed twice—then no, that is not what gives us security. That building is only an object lesson, a teaching tool, a stage where a play was enacted to teach reality. But if we mean by “His dwelling place” “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” (John 1:14 NIV84), then this is absolutely true, our security is found in Jesus!

- What about the second part, His everlasting covenant with them as His treasured possession? What is that covenant? The covenant of grace—when was that covenant given? In Eden to Adam and Eve after they fell and the Messiah was promised. So, to whom is that covenant promised and made available? To all humanity. And who receives the blessing of that covenant? All those who have faith like Abraham:
  - a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. (Romans 2:29 NIV84).
  - If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:29 NIV84).
  - Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. (Galatians 3:7–9 NIV84).
- God does not simply promise not to reject His covenantal people—He actively works to keep them secure in Him. He forgives their sins (Ps. 103:3); He instructs, blesses, and strengthens His people (Ps. 25:8–11, Ps. 29:11, Ps. 105:24).
  - Who are His covenant people? All who have faith like Abraham and thus have circumcision of the heart, i.e. are reborn, are transformed, are healed, are set right in heart and mind. It is reality based, actual transformation of the sinner from distrust and enmity of God to love and trust in God.
- God’s judgments are given to turn the people to righteousness and to demonstrate that God cares for them (Ps. 94:8–15).
  - And how do they use judgments here? This is a correct use of the word, as therapeutic interventions that are judged to be healing and redemptive. This is a design law application and we agree!
  - But is this how judgment is always used by the authors?

## **THURSDAY**

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Read the first paragraph,

- The Lord’s supremacy in the world as the Sovereign Creator, King, and Judge has theological implications for the reliability of His testimonies. The testimonies (Hebrew ‘edut, “decree,” “law”) refer to the body of laws and ordinances with which the Lord governs the religious and social life of His people (Exod. 32:15). They are “very sure” (Ps. 93:5), reflecting the stability and permanence of God’s throne and the world that God created and sustains (Ps. 93:1, 2). The Hebrew word translated as “sure” (the English word amen derives from this word) conveys the notion of reliability, faithfulness, and firmness (2 Sam. 7:16, 1 Chron. 17:23). God’s laws are unchangeable and indestructible. (Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2024, Psalms p. 25).

The first sentence is absolutely true, “The Lord’s supremacy in the world as the Sovereign Creator, King, and Judge has theological implications for the reliability of His testimonies.”



What is another way to say this? What we believe about God determines whether we can trust Him!

And what we believe about God—His Sovereignty, Him as ruling King and righteous Judge are all determined by what we believe about God's law.

Consider standing at the foot of the cross and asking those religious leaders who were crucifying Jesus:

- Do you believe in the Bible? Absolutely, and that is why we are here because this man refused to follow the Bible and wouldn't stone a woman caught in adultery.
- Do you believe in God as Creator? Of course, and that is why we are here because this man claimed He was equal with the Creator.
- Do you believe in God as Sovereign and Judge of all the Earth? Absolutely, and that is why we are here because this man usurped God's authority and healed on Sabbath and law breaking requires inflicted punishment and we are here to ensure He is judged and punished.

If you went down the list of doctrines—did they eat a different diet from Jesus? Did they have a different Bible? Did they have a different understanding of creation? Did they have a different sanctuary? Did they observe different festivals? Did they have a different Sabbath?

What did they have different? The law of God and thus they worshiped a false pagan god with all the right doctrines.

This is happening to our own church today! Those who are worshiping and teaching the false views of God are not deniers of God as Creator, King or Judge—they all believe passionately those things, but because they believe all those things through the framework of Satan's lies about God's law, because they believe God's law functions like human law, they come to a completely different conclusion about who God is, His character, methods, principles, government, the problem of sin, the solution for it, and ultimately they teach things about God's law and justice that undermine our ability to trust Him. They create theologies in which to trust—they trust in:

- A blood payment to keep them safe from the god they don't trust
- A mediator to stand between them and protect them from the god they don't trust
- A covering of some type to hide them from the god they don't trust
- A legal adjustment in books to force the god they don't trust to follow the law and declare them innocent

Understand, the penal legal system of theology is a fraud that teaches people to trust in various things that influence, shield, protect, or control the god they do not trust. They do not want to go into God's presence directly, they want these mechanisms involved.