

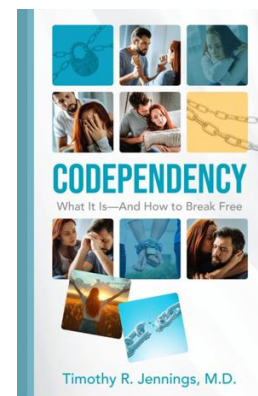


## 2024 4Q Themes in the Gospel of John Lesson 3 The Backstory: The Prologue

by Tim Jennings

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**New Codependency Pamphlet** is now available online in our USA Store (comeandreason.shop) and shipped to any US Postal address.



The lesson focuses are attention on John 1—In the Beginning was the Word and the backstory, the prologue, taking us back to the beginning of all things. And I thought we might do something a little different today, because this is such an important topic—and that is to unpack the best Bible commentary on this subject I have ever read, the first chapter of the book *Patriarchs and Prophets*. This book is the first book in a five-volume set that is a commentary on the entire Bible story arch, from the beginning of the rebellion in heaven to the final end of sin and sinners with the universe restored to perfection. And the first three words at the beginning of the first chapter of the first book are: “God is love” and the last three words at the end of the fifth volume is “God is love” and everything in between is a discussion on how love overcomes sin.

So, let’s unpack as much of this first chapter entitled *Why Was Sin Permitted?*, as we can:

- “God is love.” 1 John 4:16. His nature, His law, is love. It ever has been; it ever will be. “The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity,” whose “ways are everlasting,” changeth not. With Him “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Isaiah 57:15; Habakkuk 3:6; James 1:17. (*Patriarchs and Prophets* 33.1).

Do you agree? What does this mean? God is love—is that the same thing is God is loving? How does love function? Love is not self-seeking, love is altruistic, other-centered, beneficent, it is not selfish.

What do you think about not only God’s nature being love, but God’s law being love? Does love function by force, coercion, threat, and inflicted punishments? Can you get love, advance love, promote love by making up rules and then threatening to punish people if they disobey your rules? What happens if one makes up rules that are labeled as laws but that are not design laws and then begins using external pressures to force compliance upon people who do not agree with the rules? Fear, distrust, and rebellion—that is how reality functions.

So this very opening paragraph is making the case that God is love, not just His emotions, attitudes, or feelings, but His nature, and as Creator when He built reality He built it to operate in harmony with

Himself as He is the sustainer of all things. Thus God's laws are design laws; they are expressions of His nature, His law is love, giving, beneficence and to break that law breaks the very protocols of life and will result in suffering and death unless healed by God.

And the Bible teaches that love rejoices in the truth (1 Cor 13) and thus God is also truth as the Bible teaches. Thus love is always truthful, loves truth, advances truth, promotes truth, and does not seek to replace truth with fantasy, falsehood, imaginary beliefs, concepts that feel good but contradict reality. We see today how evil advances through replacing truth with lies under the umbrella of loving people, of being compassionate, of not wanting to hurt someone's feelings, of being accepting and tolerant—but this is all anti-love for love does not advance falsehoods, love does not delight in lies. Why? Because to tenderly, gently, kindly endorse lies to avoid upsetting someone's feelings advances evil and injures and destroys and love is all about healing, restoration, recreation and life.

And love only exists in an atmosphere of freedom. So again we find that God's law cannot be the laws that creatures make up; God does not govern by coercion, force, and externally inflicted penalties.

But the Bible teaches God disciplines those He loves and God gave many types of rules. So if God's government is not built upon imposed laws and God doesn't rule by external force and coercive pressure then how do we understand all the examples in Scripture of God using power and the fact God says He disciplines those He loves.

Discipline comes from the root word, disciple, and it means to teach. Thus love will intervene with artificially imposed consequences to educate, teach, illustrate and bring lessons home to the heart and mind in order to bring children to repentance, to understanding, to comprehension so they will freely choose to turn their hearts and minds around. Such discipline is a mediation, an intercession, a go-between, an action placed between the wrong-doer and the true ultimate results of reaping what the wrongdoer is choosing for the purpose of protecting and redeeming the child from destroying themselves.

Punishment comes from the same root as punitive and means to exact vengeance upon, to enforce, to inflict punishment. There is nothing redemptive about punishing. Punishment is not done for the benefit of the offender, it is for others, so the sinful community will not rebel, so the sinful community will feel life is fair, so the sinful community will not seek their own vengeance, and **so those in power can retain their power over others through intimidation and fear of punishment.**

God, in love, when dealing with rebellious, unrighteous, selfish, sinful people, set up a system of rules with legal authorities and mechanisms to inflict punishments. God's instructions were for the purpose of discipline and redemption of each criminal/sinner/rule-breaker and also to protect the community from the sin in their own lives, to protect the members of the community from being drawn into acts of vengeance to protect them from envy, jealousy, lust, acting out on anger, and to believe in some form of accountability and fairness, to provide some social order in a sinful world while God is working to heal hearts and minds back to His ideal, and help them grow up and mature so they realize God's laws are design laws and breaking them destroys the sinner so we don't ever need to be jealous of a person doing evil.

Thus all the old testament laws given through Moses are only intended for those who have not been reborn, for the rebellious, and also for the reborn immature, infant-like children who don't know better yet, who without a rule would still play in the street or not brush their teeth, or worship Baal thinking it is right.

The Apostle Paul was constantly dealing with this same conflict, the legalistic Jewish leaders who believed God's law functioned like human law and who went around trying to impose rules on people and thereby caused confusion. So Paul had to write to the Galatians and remind them that God's written laws, including the Ten Commandments, were added because of sin for the need of people (Galatians 3:19-25).

But perhaps Paul was most clear when writing to Timothy,

- The goal of this command is **love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith**. Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. They want to be **teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about** or what they so confidently affirm. (1 Timothy 1:5-7 NIV84, emphasis mine).

Paul makes clear God's kingdom is the kingdom of love that functions upon the living laws, protocols, of love, that operate in the heart. However, the teachers of the law don't know what they are talking about. They are promoting rules and rule-enforcement, the kinds of laws creatures make up and which will lead to rebellion if the heart is not converted to love. And force violates liberty, which destroys love. And this is what all legal religions do: they destroy love and incite more rebellion against God. So Paul goes on and makes it clear that God's written law is NOT for the righteous, but the immature, selfish, unconverted people:

- We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. We also know that law is made **not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels**, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me. (1 Timothy 1:8-11 NIV84, emphasis mine).

As the Bible teaches the law was added because of our sin to reveal it to us, convict us or diagnose us to convince us of our terminal condition, and to lead us to Jesus our heavenly physician for healing. The written law, including the Ten Commandments, was added for our need and only has operational benefit in a world of sin. In a world where God has restored His living law of love, truth, liberty into hearts and minds and eradicated fear and selfishness (the carnal nature) there is no written law not to murder, steal, commit adultery, bear false witness, avoid other gods etc., because the righteous are repulsed by even the thought of such things. The Ten Commandment law has purpose and function only in a world of sin. God's eternal design laws exist and function over the entire universe through all eternity past and future.

What about the idea that it has always been this way and always will be this way, that God doesn't change?

God is constant, reliable, trustworthy, predictable, and He is not biased, prejudicial, and He does not play favorites. His laws are constants and treat everyone exactly the same—always.

Thus, when Adam sinned—God did not get changed. God's law did not get changed. The condition of Adam and Eve was changed and therefore, however one explains the plan of salvation its impact for saving humans is not on God, nor on God's law, but on the species human. Humanity must be changed back from distrust, rebellion, and sin to loyalty and righteousness.

All of this and more is described in just the opening paragraph. Continuing on:

- Every manifestation of creative power is an expression of infinite love. The sovereignty of God involves fullness of blessing to all created beings... (Patriarchs and Prophets 33.2).

What does this mean? When God created, He created all things in harmony with His nature and design law of love. Thus God's laws are the protocols of life. And at this time in human history, we are called back to worshiping God as Creator, which requires us to reject the human, Roman, idea of law, the imposed law view of made-up rules requiring legal enforcement.

- The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God's unchanging love. (Patriarchs and Prophets 33.4).

What does this mean? How does love function? How can God win this war? What happens if people come to the Bible or this commentary with the assumption, the presupposition, the belief that God's law functions like human law—a system of rules that require externally inflicted punishment? If they believe that, won't they read the Bible or this commentary and conclude that using external power to punish wickedness is what love does? This is how Satan deceives. He gets people to assume things that are false and then gets them to apply their false assumed idea to the formation of how they believe life works, and their ideas about God and God's actions. Rather than becoming a thinker, someone who has developed by practice the ability to discern right from wrong because they understand the design laws on how reality function, they instead are operating on claims. They think like this "The Bible says God is love and the Bible says that sin must be punished; therefore punishing sin must be loving."

But what happens to love if God were to use power to put down rebellion? If God were to restrict liberties, to force compliance, what would happen in the hearts and minds of His intelligent creatures?

Do we recognize the war was never a war of might and power? It is a war of words, ideas, methods, principles, and who we trust? And each person decides what they believe, what methods they prefer, and who they trust, and this changes us.

Do we really believe God is love—or have we replaced the truth of our Creator God with an imperial dictator who we teach is the source of inflicted pain, suffering, and death rather than the source of healing, comfort, and love?

- The Sovereign of the universe was not alone in His work of beneficence. He had an associate—a co-worker who could appreciate His purposes, and could share His joy in giving happiness to created beings. **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.”** John 1:1, 2. Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—**one in nature, in character, in purpose—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.** “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6. His “goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5:2. And the Son of God declares concerning Himself: “The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting.... When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.” Proverbs 8:22-30. (Patriarchs and Prophets 34.1, emphasis mine).

What is being taught in John 1—in the beginning was the Word? Do you agree with this commentary that Jesus is the Word and is equal in nature, character, and purpose with the Father?

Why is Jesus the only one that could enter into the counsels and purposes of God? Is it that God is arbitrary, selfish, restrictive, refuses to allow others in—or is it a function of reality, God is an infinite being, infinite in power, in knowledge, in presence, and only another infinite being can enter into infinity, only another infinite being can process infinite power and knowledge. If a finite being were permitted to enter such a space it would destroy them.

So, Jesus is not a created being, Jesus is a member of the Godhead, the divine Son of God who has life original to Himself and underived from another source.

Another aspect to the importance of this is that love does not function or operate in a singularity. Functional love requires an other, and the minimum number for altruistic selfless love is Three. Two can enter a state of narcissistic reinforcement in which both adore and worship each other and are selfishly gratified by the attention and affection they are receiving from the other, but when a third enters, then we see real love, when each willingly sacrifices self for the benefit of the others. And the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit demonstrate throughout all Scripture that they are each constantly seeking to give glory to the other members and are sacrificial and willing to give up their glory to glorify the other.

- **The Father wrought by His Son in the creation of all heavenly beings.** “By Him were all things created, ... whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him.” Colossians 1:16. Angels are God's ministers, radiant with the light ever flowing from His presence and speeding on rapid wing to execute His will. **But the Son, the anointed of God, the “express image of His person,” “the brightness of His**

**glory,” “upholding all things by the word of His power,”** holds supremacy over them all. Hebrews 1:3. “A glorious high throne from the beginning,” was the place of His sanctuary (Jeremiah 17:12); “a scepter of righteousness,” the scepter of His kingdom. Hebrews 1:8. “Honor and majesty are before Him: strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.” Psalm 96:6. Mercy and truth go before His face. Psalm 89:14. (Patriarchs and Prophets 34.2, emphasis mine).

Jesus is not a created being, Jesus is the member of the Godhead through whom all creation was made, including the angels in heaven.

- **The law of love being the foundation of the government of God,** the happiness of all intelligent beings depends upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. **God desires from all His creatures the service of love**—service that springs from an appreciation of His character. **He takes no pleasure in a forced obedience;** and to all **He grants freedom of will,** that they may render Him voluntary service. (Patriarchs and Prophets 34.3, emphasis mine).

Wow—what a paragraph, what do you hear? What kind of law is involved? Do you realize that all Christians who teach that God’s law, including the Ten Commandments, is a system of made-up rules that require God to punish rule-breaking are teaching something different than this author? They are not teaching God’s law is design law, and instead have replaced God’s law with Roman law, with man’s law, and end up misrepresenting God with the character of a creature—the source of inflicted pain, suffering, torment, what they describe as God’s wrath and they call it just and good.

Why does the happiness of God’s intelligent beings depend upon perfect harmony with this great principle of righteousness? For the same reason that your physical health requires harmony with the laws of health—it is the basis upon which life is constructed to operate. Love cannot be obtained by force, by imposed rules, by inflicted punishments, by the laws that creatures make up. And Satan has deceived the world into thinking that justice is the justice of law and law enforcement. And almost all of Christianity has been teaching the false penal legal way of viewing things that actually destroys love and incites more rebellion.

- So long as all created beings acknowledged **the allegiance of love,** there was **perfect harmony** throughout the universe of God... There was no note of discord to mar the celestial harmonies. **But a change came over this happy state.** There was one who **perverted the freedom** that God had granted to His creatures. Sin originated with **him who, next to Christ,** had been most honored of God and was highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven. Lucifer, “son of the morning,” was first of the covering cherubs, holy and undefiled. He stood in the presence of the great Creator, and the ceaseless beams of glory enshrouding the eternal God rested upon him. “Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering.... Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

**Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.”** Ezekiel 28:12-15. (Patriarchs and Prophets 35.1, emphasis mine).

Again, what is being described? Do you note this commentary makes it clear that Lucifer in heaven had freedom to break away from love, to pervert and corrupt himself. Consider the implications—God is infinite in power, but God does not use power to threaten, coerce, force, or inflict punishment upon Lucifer, nor his angels. God has the power to eliminate rebellion before anyone else knows. He could have eliminated Lucifer, in fact He could have not created Him to start with, however, would such an action be consistent with how love functions? Would it be true freedom or would it be pretense, free only as long as one chooses to do what God wants? And what kind of being would God be if He did this? Do we recognize God did not use power and might to inflict punishment upon Lucifer, God did not hold a tribunal, bring Lucifer before the court and prosecute him for sin-crimes. God did not execute him. In fact, God began using power to try and redeem Lucifer and to prevent the spread of sin. God used power to keep Lucifer alive for Lucifer’s life comes from God. God kept the living connection with this rebel angel because if God would have allowed death—what would the other loyal beings have concluded? That God does use power to harm, to kill, and what happens to love and trust?

Do you hear from this commentary that the problem was that Lucifer broke a rule and got in legal trouble, or something fundamentally changed in him? And this change is counter to, opposed to, love and trust. What might that be? Consider as the commentary continues—do you agree?

- Little by little **Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation**. The Scripture says, “Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.” Ezekiel 28:17. “Thou hast said in thine heart, ...I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.... I will be like the Most High.” Isaiah 14:13, 14. Though **all his glory was from God**, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. **Not content with his position**, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to covet homage due alone to the Creator. Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of all created beings, **it was his endeavor to secure their service and loyalty to himself. And coveting the glory with which the infinite Father had invested His Son, this prince of angels aspired to power that was the prerogative of Christ alone.** (Patriarchs and Prophets 35.2, emphasis mine).

What do you hear being described? What is happening? Is this a legal problem or a functional problem? Is something happening within Lucifer that is changing him in a way that is harmful to him? Is God or Jesus Lucifer’s enemy—are they out to harm or hurt or destroy Lucifer? Is Lucifer making himself God’s enemy?

Is God at fault for Lucifer’s rebellion? What does it reveal about God that Lucifer has the freedom to rebel? What does it reveal about God’s law?

- Now the perfect harmony of heaven was broken. **Lucifer's disposition to serve himself instead of his Creator** aroused a feeling of apprehension when observed by those who

considered that the glory of God should be supreme. In heavenly council the angels pleaded with Lucifer. The Son of God presented before him the greatness, the goodness, and **the justice of the Creator, and the sacred, unchanging nature of His law**. God Himself had established the order of heaven; and in departing from it, Lucifer would dishonor his Maker and **bring ruin upon himself**. But the **warning, given in infinite love and mercy**, only aroused a spirit of resistance. Lucifer allowed **his jealousy of Christ** to prevail, and became the more determined. (Patriarchs and Prophets 35.3, emphasis mine)

What do you hear? What kind of law is described as being in operation? How is it Lucifer brings ruin upon himself? Is it because he gets in legal trouble and God is required by law and justice to use power to inflict pain, suffering, and death that Lucifer would not otherwise reap? Or is it that Lucifer is breaking the laws of life and is destroying himself just like a person who breaks the physical laws of health does to their body?

What is the justice of the Creator? Is it the infliction of punishment or is it doing what is right, healthy, good, because it is so, and Jesus was doing justice by speaking truth in love to Lucifer to try and turn Lucifer around, to bring Lucifer to reject the lies and selfishness and to return to love and trust?

- **To dispute the supremacy of the Son of God**, thus impeaching the wisdom and love of the Creator, had become the purpose of this prince of angels. To this object he was about to bend the energies of that master mind, which, next to Christ's, was first among the hosts of God. But **He who would have the will of all His creatures free**, left none unguarded to the bewildering sophistry by which rebellion would seek to justify itself. Before the great contest should open, all were to have a clear presentation of His will, whose wisdom and goodness were the spring of all their joy. (Patriarchs and Prophets 36.1, emphasis mine).

What is going on? Why is Lucifer focusing on disputing the supremacy of Jesus? What role has Jesus taken amongst the Godhead?

Jesus has always functioned as the go-between, the bridge builder, the mystical ladder that connects creation with God. Jesus is the mediator. The Bible teaches that God lives in unapproachable light (1Tim 6:16). Light a symbol for God's glory, power, knowledge, truth, and love. God is infinite and His power and knowledge. He is infinite and thus a finite being, including a created angel, cannot enter into the fullness of infinity—thus for God to have the closest connection to His creatures a member of the Godhead must leave infinity and interacts with us in our linear existence—and that member is Jesus.

Jesus left infinity and interacted on the plane of existence that angels lived.

Prior to Jesus becoming a human, the Bible teaches that He appeared, manifested, *took the form* of an angel but, Jesus **was not an angel**, He only appeared in the form of an angel. Similarly to Him taking the form of a human when meeting with Abraham, but Jesus back then was not human. And Lucifer took advantage of God's love and humble condescension in Jesus' manifesting in the form of a creature to make allegations of equality with Jesus and thereby make accusations against God that God



was unfair in allowing Jesus to enter into certain counsels that Lucifer was not permitted to enter. See our blog [Are Jesus and Michael One and the Same?](#)

- The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence **He might set forth the true position of His Son** and show the relation He sustained to all created beings. The **Son of God shared the Father's throne**, and the glory of the eternal, self-existent One encircled both. About the throne gathered the holy angels... Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that **none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes**, and to **Him it was committed to execute** the mighty counsels of His will. The **Son of God had wrought the Father's will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven**; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due. **Christ was still to exercise divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants.** But in all this **He would not seek power or exaltation for Himself** contrary to God's plan, but would **exalt the Father's glory** and execute His purposes of beneficence and love. (Patriarchs and Prophets 36.2, emphasis mine).

What do you think of this paragraph? It is making the true position of the Son clear, why wasn't this already known?

Did Jesus do such a good job of being a human that many refused to believe He was also fully God? Would Jesus, as we see Him depicted in the gospels, be arrogant, prideful, seek to get glory for self, or would He be His gentle, humble, meek, loving self? Yet despite appearing as an angel, He would be fully God, but is it not consistent with what Jesus Himself revealed about Himself when He was here that He would be so unassuming, so eager to build up others, that none would live in fear of Him, and His gentle loving self allowed Satan's allegations to cause confusion necessitating God's formal declaration of reality—that Jesus is fully God equal in all things with the Father?

Why could only Jesus fully enter into God's purposes? Because only an infinite being can comprehend the full thoughts and purposes of an infinite being. And Jesus was the agent through which God's purposes are carried out. And, consistent with Scripture, rebellion began in heaven **before** this Earth was created. And Jesus, being the one who created this earth and life on it, demonstrates **by action** that He is the Creator and not a created being like Lucifer.

- The angels joyfully acknowledged the supremacy of Christ, and prostrating themselves before Him, poured out their love and adoration. Lucifer bowed with them, but in his heart there was a strange, fierce conflict. **Truth, justice, and loyalty were struggling against envy and jealousy.** The influence of the holy angels seemed for a time to carry him with them... But again **he was filled with pride in his own glory. His desire for supremacy returned, and envy of Christ was once more indulged.** The high honors conferred upon Lucifer were not appreciated as God's special gift, and therefore, called forth no gratitude to his Creator. He gloried in his brightness and exaltation and aspired to be equal with God. He was beloved and revered by the heavenly host, angels delighted to execute his commands, and he was clothed with wisdom and glory above them all. **Yet the Son of God was exalted above him, as one in power and authority with the Father. He shared the Father's counsels, while**

**Lucifer did not thus enter into the purposes of God.** “Why,” questioned this mighty angel, “should Christ have the supremacy? Why is He honored above Lucifer?” (Patriarchs and Prophets 36.3, emphasis mine).

Now watch what Lucifer does, what envy, jealousy, and selfishness does, what methods it employs:

- Leaving his place in the immediate presence of the Father, Lucifer went forth to diffuse the spirit of discontent among the angels. **He worked with mysterious secrecy**, and for a time concealed his real purpose **under an appearance of reverence for God**. He began to **insinuate doubts concerning the laws that governed heavenly beings**, intimating that though laws might be necessary for the inhabitants of the worlds, angels, being more exalted, needed no such restraint, for their own wisdom was a sufficient guide. They were not beings that could bring dishonor to God; all their thoughts were holy; it was no more possible for them than for God Himself to err. **The exaltation of the Son of God as equal with the Father was represented as an injustice to Lucifer**, who, it was claimed, was also entitled to reverence and honor. If this prince of angels could but attain to his true, exalted position, great good would accrue to the entire host of heaven; for it was his object to secure freedom for all. **But now even the liberty which they had hitherto enjoyed was at an end; for an absolute Ruler had been appointed them, and to His authority all must pay homage**. Such were the subtle deceptions that through the wiles of Lucifer were fast obtaining in the heavenly courts. (Patriarchs and Prophets 37.1, emphasis mine).

Evil people, when they do not possess absolute power, will pretend to be interested in helping others, will disguise their evil intentions under the guise of seeking the greater good, or helping others, or doing justice, but they will introduce doubts to cause people to question the truth, what is right, and lead people into rebellion and self-destruction. If you have discernment you can see this method use widely by certain political parties and leaders in our society—constantly claiming to be interested in helping the people, but their actions are actions that harm and destroy. When their policies are put into place communities decay, crime, exploitation, abuse increase, families are fractured, and society worsens. Yet, they turn around and blame their opponents of doing what they themselves are doing. This is what Satan did in heaven and his followers do the same thing here on earth!. This is a spiritual war, not a political war, it is a war over hearts and minds, love, truth, freedom versus selfishness, lies, and coercion.

What law is in operation in heaven and what was Lucifer doing? What did Lucifer allege? What kind of law did Lucifer claim was God’s law? Had anything in reality changed? Had Christ been elevated to a position He did not always possess? Had Lucifer been demoted? What caused all this disruption? It was selfishness, envy, and then the lies told about God that broke the circle of love and trust resulting in fear and selfishness spreading to angels.

Can God eliminate fear, distrust of Him, and selfishness by the exercise of might and power? Can God eliminate this rebellion of distrust by using power to punish those raising questions? If God would have eliminated Lucifer and simply turned to the universe and declared. “Lucifer has been rebelling. What he was doing is evil. I am love and I am just and what I did in eliminating Lucifer was for the

good of the universe. You can still trust me. Anybody else have any questions?" What would have happened?

- **There had been no change in the position or authority of Christ.** Lucifer's envy and misrepresentation and his claims to equality with Christ **had made necessary a statement of the true position of the Son of God; but this had been the same from the beginning.** Many of the angels were, however, blinded by Lucifer's deceptions. (Patriarchs and Prophets 38.1, emphasis mine).

Jesus is fully God, always has been, always will be. But Satan's lies caused confusion and it was this confusion that necessitated making a statement. But God's declaration of the position and authority of Christ did not make it so, God declared it because it was so. And while it was necessary to declare the truth, God did not stop with the declaration of truth, God gave real evidence. And this is why Jesus is the member of the Godhead who created this world, why John 1, our memory verse for today, focuses on the Word who is God and through whom all things were made. Because the war began over God's trustworthiness when Lucifer became infatuated with himself, jealous of Jesus, and made allegations of equality with Jesus. Thus Jesus demonstrates by action that He is fully God, Creator and Sustainer of all things, while Lucifer is not.

- **Taking advantage of the loving, loyal trust reposed in him** by the holy beings under his command, he had **so artfully instilled into their minds his own distrust and discontent** that his agency was not discerned. Lucifer had presented the purposes of God **in a false light—misconstruing and distorting them to excite dissent and dissatisfaction.** He **cunningly drew his hearers on to give utterance to their feelings;** then these expressions were repeated by him when it would serve his purpose, **as evidence that the angels were not fully in harmony with the government of God.** While **claiming for himself perfect loyalty to God,** he urged that changes in the order and laws of heaven were necessary for the stability of the divine government. Thus **while working to excite opposition to the law of God** and to instill his own discontent into the minds of the angels under him, he was ostensibly seeking to remove dissatisfaction and to reconcile disaffected angels to the order of heaven. **While secretly fomenting discord and rebellion, he with consummate craft caused it to appear as his sole purpose to promote loyalty and to preserve harmony and peace.** (Patriarchs and Prophets 38.2, emphasis mine).

The evil will exploit the love and trust of others. This is why it is so critical to be careful who we trust. Do you think for yourself, or do you trust others to tell you the answer? Do you trust your pastors, priests, popes, conference leaders to tell you what to believe? Do you trust me to tell you what to think and believe? Don't, I am human, I am fallible, I am not God. I am not your mind. I am only a voice calling for people to think for themselves, to connect with God for themselves, to know the truth for themselves. We are to trust God and that trust is to be based on an intelligent understanding of who He is as revealed by the evidence He has provided in Scripture, nature, and life experiences.

The evil also insinuate their own distrust and discontent into the hearts of their victims getting others to take up their cry and advance their evil. We see this done by the evil on our society today, just

consider the defund the police movement, in which people were duped into advocating for defunding of police which resulted in their communities being ravaged by criminals. Why did people go along with this? Because they believed the lie that the principles in the US constitution are evil, abusive, and exploitive, and thus the institutions of society must be torn down, rather than the truth that people are either reborn in righteousness or persist in wickedness. And wicked people can find themselves in positions of authority and abuse their positions—but that does not mean the system was at fault, only the people who were doing wrong were. But the evil, who want power, want to remove the barriers to their power over others, and that includes the US constitution with its protection of our inalienable rights, such as freedom of speech. Right now today, one political party is actively, publicly, advocating for the removal of the first amendment protection on the freedom of speech—why? To advance their evil without the restraining power of truth exposing their lies.

- **The spirit of dissatisfaction thus kindled was doing its baleful work.** While there was **no open outbreak**, division of feeling imperceptibly grew up among the angels. There were some who looked with favor upon Lucifer's insinuations against the government of God. Although they had heretofore been in perfect harmony with the order which God had established, **they were now discontented and unhappy** because they could not penetrate His unsearchable counsels; **they were dissatisfied** with His purpose in exalting Christ. These stood ready to second **Lucifer's demand for equal authority** with the Son of God. But angels who were loyal and true maintained the wisdom and justice of the divine decree and endeavored to reconcile this disaffected being to the will of God. **Christ was the Son of God; He had been one with Him before the angels were called into existence. He had ever stood** at the right hand of the Father; His supremacy, so full of blessing to all who came under its benignant control, had not heretofore been questioned. The harmony of heaven had never been interrupted; wherefore should there now be discord? The loyal angels could see only terrible consequences from this dissension, and with earnest entreaty they counseled the disaffected ones to renounce their purpose and prove themselves loyal to God by fidelity to His government. (Patriarchs and Prophets 38.3, emphasis mine).

The evil will take on the mantle of seeking to do good, seeking to benefit others, seeking to improve the situation, seeking to protect from misinformation—but in reality they are only interested in power for themselves, but they will accuse others of what they are doing. They will work to stir up dissatisfaction in others and then cite those expressed feelings as support for their cause.

Do you see these methods being used in our society today?

- In great mercy, according to His divine character, **God bore long with Lucifer.** The spirit of discontent and disaffection had never before been known in heaven. It was a new element, strange, mysterious, unaccountable. Lucifer himself had not at first been acquainted with the real nature of his feelings; for a time he had feared to express the workings and imaginings of his mind; yet he did not dismiss them. He did not see whither he was drifting. But such efforts as infinite love and wisdom only could devise, were made to convince him of his error. **His disaffection was proved to be without cause, and he was made to see what would be the result of persisting in revolt. Lucifer was convinced that he was in the wrong.** He saw that

“the Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works” (Psalm 145:17); that the divine statutes are just, and that he ought to acknowledge them as such before all heaven. **Had he done this, he might have saved himself and many angels. He had not at that time fully cast off his allegiance to God.** Though he had left his position as covering cherub, **yet if he had been willing to return to God, acknowledging the Creator's wisdom, and satisfied to fill the place appointed him in God's great plan, he would have been reinstated in his office. The time had come for a final decision;** he must fully yield to the divine sovereignty or place himself in open rebellion. He nearly reached the decision to return, **but pride forbade him.** It was too great a sacrifice for one who had been so highly honored to confess that he had been in error, that his imaginings were false, and to yield to the authority which he had been working to prove unjust. (Patriarchs and Prophets 39.1, emphasis mine).

What do you hear described? Is this a legal process? Rules were broken, someone has offered to pay the penalty, Lucifer's heavenly fine, but Lucifer refuses to accept the payment? Or do you hear design law, how love, truth, and liberty actually function, what happens when one indulges selfishness, prefers lies?

What is the reason that the time has come for a final decision? Is it that God set a clock, “I will give you 10 minutes to make up your mind!” Or is it that sin, lies, selfishness, rebellion actually changes people and that Lucifer has been presented with truth that he understands and he must decide, and his decision will change him; and if he doesn't repent he will destroy the faculties within himself that respond to love and truth and will harden himself in open rebellion and from that point on no further amount of love and truth will have any redeeming impact upon him? It is design law; it is not penal-legal. It is how love and truth work!

And what was it that stopped Lucifer from accepting the truth repenting, admitting that he was wrong? Pride, there was no barrier from God that prevented reconciliation. There was no legal reason, no made up rule that required payment, it was totally in the heart and mind of Lucifer, he chose rebellion and he chose alienation.

- A **compassionate Creator**, in yearning pity for Lucifer and his followers, **was seeking to draw them back** from the abyss of ruin into which they were about to plunge. But His mercy was misinterpreted. **Lucifer pointed to the long-suffering of God as an evidence of his own superiority**, an indication that the King of the universe would yet accede to his terms. If the angels would stand firmly with him, he declared, they could yet gain all that they desired. **He persistently defended his own course, and fully committed himself to the great controversy against his Maker.** Thus it was that Lucifer, “the light bearer,” the sharer of God's glory, the attendant of His throne, by transgression became Satan, “the adversary” of God and holy beings and **the destroyer** of those whom Heaven had committed to his guidance and guardianship. (Patriarchs and Prophets 39.2, emphasis mine).

Jesus, the compassionate Creator sought to save Lucifer, but Lucifer twisted the patience of God and used God's very kindness as evidence of weakness. Lucifer chose to resist truth and love and Lucifer

corrupted himself and committed himself into rebellion and thus became the destroyer, the murderer from the beginning of the rebellion. But it wasn't until the cross that God could fully expose him.

- **Rejecting with disdain the arguments and entreaties of the loyal angels, he denounced them as deluded slaves.** The preference shown to Christ he **declared an act of injustice** both to himself and to all the heavenly host, and announced that he would no longer submit **to this invasion of his rights and theirs**. He would never again acknowledge the supremacy of Christ. He had determined **to claim the honor which should have been given him**, and take command of all who would become his followers; and **he promised those who would enter his ranks a new and better government, under which all would enjoy freedom**. Great numbers of the angels signified their purpose to accept him as their leader. Flattered by the favor with which his advances were received, he hoped to win all the angels to his side, to become equal with God Himself, and to be obeyed by the entire host of heaven. (Patriarchs and Prophets 40.1, emphasis mine).

What is described in this paragraph? What methods? God's love, patience, kindness, mercy, truth—is rejected with disdain. What can God do for those who disdain His mercy, love, patience, kindness? We see this in those who crucified Christ, who saw Him healing the sick and showing mercy to the sinners and accused Him of having a demon.

And Satan uses the framework of law and justice. Satan claims he was treated unjustly, that God's laws are unjust, that his rights are being violated, and that through him and his system of imposed rules and inflicted punishments people will have more freedom.

Do you see these same methods, tactics, and arguments made in the world today? Is there a particular type of government that has used these exact methods over and over again in many countries around the world and is attempting to use them here in the US right now?

Consider, has there been political movements that work to incite dissatisfaction in the people, to cause them to question the institutions that have brought stability and promoted liberties, to argue that the various systems of government are the actual sources of abuse and exploitation, that liberties are compromised by these institutions, that we would have more freedom if we got rid of these institutions, that the people could have more freedom if the government takes control of everything? What kind of governments have made these arguments and tricked people into believing them and ultimately resulted in the governments that destroy the most of any other? It is the Marxist and Communist governments that do this. And just as in heaven, as Satan's false system took root it led the angels into destruction, so too when these methods are advanced in human governments it always results in more destruction, which is Satan's goal. It is so sad to watch millions in this country believe the lies of God's enemy and advance these destructive methods.

- Still the loyal angels urged him and his sympathizers to submit to God; and they **set before them the inevitable result should they refuse**: He who had created them could overthrow their power and signally punish their rebellious daring. **No angel could successfully oppose the law of God**, which was as sacred as Himself. They warned all to close their ears against

Lucifer's deceptive reasoning, and urged him and his followers to seek the presence of God without delay and confess the error of questioning His wisdom and authority. (Patriarchs and Prophets 40.2, emphasis mine).

What are the inevitable results of breaking the design laws of God that life is built to operate upon? Pain, suffering, and death.

We here at Come and Reason Ministries are actively sharing the truth about God and His design laws of love, truth, and liberty, and the inevitable results of what happens when people insist upon replacing God's law with imposed human laws. We pray that people will awaken and recognize the truth and be reconciled to God, for if they do not the only result in ruin and death.

It is so sad to watch, but God's protective hand is being slowly withdrawn because God is respecting the choices of millions, billions, who are closing their hearts and minds to Him. And as His protection is withdrawn the evil gain more control and the results of breaking God's methods become more and more obvious for those who have not destroyed their ability to discern truth. This is what we are seeing in the world today.

- Many were disposed to heed this counsel, **to repent of their disaffection**, and seek to be again received into favor with the Father and His Son. But Lucifer **had another deception ready**. The mighty revolter now **declared that the angels who had united with him had gone too far to return; that he was acquainted with the divine law, and knew that God would not forgive**. He declared that all who should submit to the authority of Heaven would be stripped of their honor, degraded from their position. For himself, he was determined never again to acknowledge the authority of Christ. The only course remaining for him and his followers, he said, **was to assert their liberty, and gain by force the rights** which had not been willingly accorded them. (Patriarchs and Prophets 40.3, emphasis mine).

Some of the angels were convicted by the loyal ones and thought to return, but Satan had another lie ready, and it is the lie that infects Christianity today and prevents so many from returning to true loyalty to God, it is the lie of legalism, that God will not forgive, that the divine law requires some punishment, that some legal payment must be made, that the angels will be punished with demotion, restriction, loss of some freedom and the only way forward for them is to use force to assert their liberty. But in reality, because they were breaking away from divine law, they enslaved themselves in sin, lost their freedom, and determined their end. Lucifer's claim of asserting liberty is like a person saying we will assert our liberty by smoking cigarettes, doing drugs, drinking heavily—all which break the laws of health and make them less healthy, less capable of walking, or moving, thus enslaving them, and ultimately killing them.

- **So far as Satan himself was concerned, it was true that he had now gone too far to return. But not so with those who had been blinded by his deceptions.** To them the counsel and entreaties of the loyal angels opened a door of hope; and **had they heeded the warning, they might have broken away from the snare of Satan. But pride, love for their leader, and the**

**desire for unrestricted freedom** were permitted to bear sway, and the pleadings of divine love and mercy **were finally rejected**. (Patriarchs and Prophets 41.1, emphasis mine).

Satan had destroyed within himself the faculties that respond to truth and love and nothing more could be done to win him back to love and trust. But the other angels had not fully destroyed those faculties at that time. It was their choice, their response to the truth and Satan's lies that decided for them whether they would be healed or whether they would destroy themselves. It was their choice to prefer the lies to the truth that changed them and solidified them into rebellion.

What law is in operation here? Do you see that there is nothing penal legal going on in the opening of the rebellion. And there has never been anything penal legal going on, it is all reality based.

- God permitted Satan to carry forward his work until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. **It was necessary for his plans to be fully developed, that their true nature and tendency might be seen by all**. Lucifer, as the anointed cherub, had been highly exalted; he was greatly loved by the heavenly beings, and **his influence over them was strong**. God's government included not only the inhabitants of heaven, but of all the worlds that He had created; and Lucifer had concluded that if he could carry the angels of heaven with him in rebellion, he could carry also all the worlds. He had artfully presented his side of the question, **employing sophistry and fraud** to secure his objects. His power to deceive was very great. By **disguising himself in a cloak of falsehood**, he had gained an advantage. All his acts were so **clothed with mystery** that it was **difficult to disclose to the angels the true nature of his work**. **Until fully developed, it could not be made to appear the evil thing it was; his disaffection would not be seen to be rebellion**. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character or see to what his work was leading. (Patriarchs and Prophets 41.2, emphasis mine).

Why did God permit Lucifer's rebellion to proceed? If God uses external power to terminate Lucifer or imprison him, what is the result on the rest of the angels and worlds? Can love and truth win by external force and punishment? The only way for love and truth to win is through revelation, through the outworking of love and truth, which is always in freedom.

- Lucifer had at first so conducted his temptations that he himself stood uncommitted. The angels whom he could not bring fully to his side, he accused of indifference to the interests of heavenly beings. **The very work which he himself was doing, he charged upon the loyal angels**. **It was his policy to perplex with subtle arguments** concerning the purposes of God. **Everything that was simple he shrouded in mystery**, and by **artful perversion** cast doubt upon the plainest statements of Jehovah. And his high position, so closely connected with the divine government, gave greater force to his representations. (Patriarchs and Prophets 41.3, emphasis mine).

Satan is a deceiver, he uses methods to confuse, perplex, make mysterious. He also does evil and then blames the loyal for the evil he is doing. Do you see this being done in politics today? Do evil and then



blame those fighting against the evil as being the cause of the evil? I hope you can see it, it is so obvious.

- God could employ only such means as were consistent with **truth and righteousness**. **Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit**. He had sought to falsify the word of God and **had misrepresented His plan of government, claiming that God was not just in imposing laws upon the angels**; that in requiring submission and obedience from His creatures, He was seeking merely the exaltation of Himself. It was therefore necessary to **demonstrate before the inhabitants of heaven, and of all the worlds, that God's government is just, His law perfect**. Satan had made it appear that he himself was seeking to promote the good of the universe. The true character of the usurper and his real object must be understood by all. He must have time to manifest himself by his wicked works. (Patriarchs and Prophets 42.1, emphasis mine).

Those who believe the lie that God's law functions like Roman law will argue that the statement "claiming that God was not just in imposing laws upon the angels" means that God is indeed being just to impose laws upon His creatures and, therefore, God's laws are, in fact, imposed just like human laws. But the author is actually demonstrating the subtlety of the satanic deception, how Lucifer in heaven could deceive sinless angels—for this statement reveals a double lie designed to trick people into accepting one lie by rejecting the other lie.

Consider someone telling you the following lie about one of your close friends, a friend you are certain is always just in all of his actions: "John is not just in beating his wife." Knowing that your friend is always just, you immediately recognize the allegation that "John is not just" is a lie. So, in order to reject the lie that John is not just, you conclude, "No, John must be just in beating his wife." Thus, in rejecting the one lie, you accept and promote the other lie—the lie that John is beating his wife! Both insinuations are false, and both must be rejected. It is false to say God is not just, and it is also false to say God imposes laws and inflicts pain and death as punishments for breaking them.

- **The discord which his own course had caused in heaven, Satan charged upon the government of God**. All evil he **declared** to be the result of the divine administration. He **claimed** that it was his own object to improve upon the statutes of Jehovah. Therefore God permitted him to **demonstrate the nature of his claims**, to show the working out of his proposed changes in the divine law. **His own work must condemn him**. Satan had claimed from the first that he was not in rebellion. **The whole universe must see the deceiver unmasked**. (Patriarchs and Prophets 42.2, emphasis mine).

Again notice the difference in methods. Satan claims, Satan declares, Satan alleges, but God reveals, demonstrates. Satan claims the evil comes from God. God allows Satan to carry out his claims as evidence to reveal the pain, suffering, and harm come out from breaking God's design laws, from sin itself, not from God.

We see these methods in action in the world around us today. The evil accuse the righteous, they lie, they make claims, accusation, and deceive people into trusting them and applying their methods and when their methods are carried out we all observe the pain, suffering, and destruction that follows.

Examples include defund the police movement—everywhere this had taken place communities have been destroyed, evil has increased, more people are harmed.

Other examples include godless evolution, wherever this takes root society decays and evil rises.

Other examples in Christianity is the god-king view of God, that His law is like human law and He governs by force. Wherever this has taken root the religious abuse others.

- Even when he was cast out of heaven, **Infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan. Since only the service of love can be acceptable to God, the allegiance of His creatures must rest upon a conviction of His justice and benevolence.** The inhabitants of heaven and of the worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the nature or consequences of sin, could not then have seen the justice of God in the destruction of Satan. **Had he been immediately blotted out of existence, some would have served God from fear rather than from love. The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. For the good of the entire universe through ceaseless ages, he must more fully develop his principles,** that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings, and that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might be forever placed beyond all question. (Patriarchs and Prophets 42.3, emphasis mine).

God wins by truth, love, and freedom. God wants our love, our trust, our loyalty, our friendship. And the only way to get that is with our understanding agreement. Thus God does not use power to inflict punishment. Sin destroys not God. Sadly, most of Christianity, having accepted the lie that God's law functions like human law, teach that God is the source of inflicted pain suffering and death and thus delay the second coming of Christ.

- **Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages—a perpetual testimony to the nature of sin and its terrible results.** The working out of Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government is bound up **the well-being of all the creatures** He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a **perpetual safeguard to all holy beings,** to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin, and suffering its penalty. (Patriarchs and Prophets 42.4, emphasis mine).

Satan's rebellion and its results is evidence, history, facts revealed, demonstration that breaking God's design laws destroy and that God is always good, and always seeks to save and restore. That death is an enemy that comes from rebellion and does not come from God.

- **He that ruleth in the heavens is the one who sees the end from the beginning—the one before whom the mysteries of the past and the future are alike outspread**, and who, beyond the woe and darkness and ruin that sin has wrought, beholds the accomplishment of **His own purposes of love and blessing**. Though “clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne.” Psalm 97:2, R.V. And this the inhabitants of the universe, both loyal and disloyal, **will one day understand**. “His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.” Deuteronomy 32:4. (Patriarchs and Prophets 43.1, emphasis mine).

God foreknew and chose this path because it is the only path of love, truth, and freedom and God is love. Praise God!