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Forward to The Bible On Government

Ezekiel

003:018 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

Hosea

004:006 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

The above bible verses are the reasons I wrote this.

When I was young, I heard a few people say such-and-such was a national sin. I thought, “How silly! People sin, not countries!” Since then, as I grew older and studied the Bible, I discovered I was wrong. The Bible has much to say on government including

1. The earth is God’s. Nations exist at His discretion.
2. God blesses and punishes nations.
3. The Bible gives principles how nations should be governed.
4. The Bible outlines duties owed by citizens to government.

Over time, I made notes as I went thru the Bibles, edited them and that is what follows. I believe my views are correct. I could be wrong. What is important is this – Let the Bible speak to you. Find all passages on a subject, and keep them in context. Do not select Bible verses in piece meal to justify a view.

Bible passages are from the King James translation of 1611. This version was used because it is in the public domain and because of its faithful translation from the original texts. However, the language may seem a little stilted because people spoke differently in 1611 than they do today.

The book (or series of study notes) is largely divided into 6 main sections. They are:

1. Overviews
2. Judgment examples. The purpose of this section is to give some examples from the Bible showing that God really does judge and punish nations.
3. Citizenship responsibilities
4. Government responsibilities
5. Issues
6. Behind the veil. This section lists biblical teachings affecting nations.

I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth – that God Governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?

Benjamin Franklin, excerpt from his speech to the Constitutional Convention, June 28, 1787

Interpreting the Bible, Bible Is Inerrant

There are 2 major views on interpreting the bible. Liberals tend to believe:

1. The bible sometimes contradicts itself
2. The bible is sometimes inaccurate because it is not reasonable to believe what is in it is correct
3. The miracles in the bible can be explained by natural phenomena, or never really happened

Conservatives disagree with each of these points.

It may be helpful to write a little about how to interpret the Bible. There are a few guidelines one should follow.

Look At All Biblical Passages

First, remember that there can be multiple passages on a given topic. Sometimes the passages only talk about one aspect of an issue. So, it is important to look at all passages related to a given topic.

2 Peter

001:020 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

001:021 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Notice in the above passage it states, “no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation”, meaning one must look at all passages on a topic to get a full meaning.

A doctrine must be consistent with all passages in the bible. Remember, it only takes 1 bible verse to make a doctrine false. The following is an example how Jesus used 1 word in one sentence to disprove a doctrine.

Matthew

022:023 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

022:024 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

022:025 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

022:026 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

022:027 And last of all the woman died also.

022:028 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

022:029 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

022:030 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

022:031 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

022:032 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

Bible Does Not Contradict Itself

Second, it is important to remember that the bible does not contradict itself. Once again, look at the above passage (2 Peter 1:20-21). Bible passages fit together like a jig saw puzzle. You cannot force any piece, you cannot reshape any piece, and you cannot throw any piece away. So, if you think they contradict, look for an interpretation where they do

not. This is not always easy. When you have trouble, pray about it. Sometimes God will give the answer after a long period of time has passed.

Notice the following passage.

Numbers

023:019 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

Since God cannot lie, He cannot contradict Himself.

Let's use the following verses discussing divorce to illustrate this point.

Leviticus

020:010 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

Deuteronomy

024:001 When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.

024:002 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.

024:003 And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife;

024:004 Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Matthew

019:003 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

019:004 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

019:005 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

019:006 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

019:007 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

019:008 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

019:009 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

There is much more teaching on this topic than just these 3 passages. But they are included here as an example of what some say is a contradiction in the bible. Because why would one passage say adulterers should die and others say you can get divorced instead.

One commentator said the Deuteronomy passage does not refer to adultery because adulterers were to be killed. But Jesus in Matthew refers to the passage as referring to adultery. So, how does this all fit together?

Since the bible cannot contradict itself, one must search for an explanation that fits the pieces. To do this, it is sometimes helpful to look at the cultural setting in which it was spoken. The passage in Leviticus is part of the Mosaic Law and was meant for Israel. But how does the passage in Deuteronomy fit in if it is referring to adultery? I think the Philippines can be used as example of the culture. Remember, local Philippine governments sometimes pass laws that are different from national laws. In some areas of the Philippines, if you are married and have a child with someone who is not your spouse, you will go to jail if your spouse reports/complains about it. This is not as severe as the death penalty. But it is a severe penalty for cheating. However, few cheaters are sent to jail for this reason. This is because the spouse and children usually do not want to see that person go to jail. So, they usually just separate. (They rarely divorce because it is expensive.) I suspect that people in Moses time felt the same. I suspect that is the reason why the Deuteronomy passage is phrased that way, to avoid actually using the word 'adultery'.

There is one additional problem for the victim. It may be difficult to prove their spouse cheated. Back then, there were no paternity tests, no cameras. So, it may have been hard proving adultery even if a person knows it. So, that is another reason why the passage in Deuteronomy may have been given.

There is another example under the topic Slavery.

There are also some other possible reasons for what appear to be discrepancies. For example, some accounts in the gospels seem to conflict. However, those accounts may be talking of different events. For example, during a presidential campaign, a candidate will talk on the same subject multiple times. During Jesus's 3 year ministry, He probably did the same thing.

The bible never contradicts itself. If one thinks it does, then they have a wrong interpretation/doctrine.

Some have criticized Christians which list several bible verses to support doctrine. The critics call it a mish-mash of bible verses. That criticism is wrong because a doctrine cannot conflict with any part of the bible. If it does, it is a wrong doctrine.

Always Choose Explicit Verses Over Vague Passages

Some bible verses may be hard to understand or interpret. Sometimes these passages seem to contradict other, more clear, explicit passages. When a reader encounters a situation like this, one should interpret the vague passage in light of the explicit one, and not the other way around.

Bible Is Inerrant, Is Inspired By God

The bible is inerrant and the bible contains all we need for salvation as is written

2 Timothy

003:016 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

003:017 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Remember, God is holy and does not lie. Since all scripture is given by inspiration of God, it can be trusted. We may have trouble interpreting the meaning of a passage, but the passage itself is real and trustworthy. The following passage supports this.

2 Peter

001:016 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

And again

2 Peter

001:020 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

001:021 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

And

Numbers

012:006 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

012:007 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

012:008 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

And the scriptures are infallible.

Matthew

022:029 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

In this last passage, Jesus is saying they erred because they did not know the scriptures. The following passage is part of a prayer Jesus spoke

John

017:017 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Remember, the bible is God's word. God is holy and does not lie.

Mark

010:018 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

Numbers

023:019 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

1 Samuel

015:029 And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent.

Hebrews

006:018 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

Also, the bible's teaching remains relevant and does not become obsolete.

Matthew

005:017 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

005:018 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

And the teaching of the bible is from God, and not man.

1 Corinthians

002:012 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

002:013 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

And all of scripture is important

Matthew

004:004 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

And because it is God's word, it must be fulfilled.

Matthew

026:054 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

Regarding miracles, it should be noted that people who saw Jesus perform them never denied they were miracles. Instead, notice how some religious leaders tried to dismiss them.

Matthew

012:022 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

012:023 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?

012:024 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

So, we know that that the bible is a sure foundation, and anything that contradicts its teachings are false. There can be errors in translations to other languages. But the original texts are sure.

Writers of the Bible Wrote What God Wanted, Not What They Wanted

There seems to be a false belief among some that the writers of the bible simply wrote what they wanted. This is not true. Notice the following passage from Jude.

Jude

001:003 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

001:004 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Newer translations like the NIV make the reading easier to understand. What Jude said in verse 3 is that although he wanted to write about the common salvation, he felt a driving need to write about something else.

Accuracy of Copies

Some have claimed that errors were introduced into the original Hebrew and Greek texts as they were copied and recopied. Yes, there may be a verse or two which were dropped from a copy. But scholars say that only about 1 in 90 words are different among the copies, and the differences are minor – like the difference between but and whereas.

Yes, some modern English ‘translations’ are actually ‘interpretations’. Some have written ‘modern’ versions of the bible by converting the KJV bible into more modern English, since the trusted KJV was first published in 1611. However, many versions of the bible, like the KJV, NIV, and NKJV, were translated from the best ancient Greek and Hebrew texts.

Accuracy of Translations

Some have claimed errors crept into the bible as it was translated from one language to another. And they claim that this repeated process has caused many errors in the bible. This claim brings up 2 points. One is the accuracy of the translation from the original Hebrew and Greek texts. The other is translation of the bible from another language other than the original Hebrew and Greek.

One of challenges translators have is that there is sometimes no word in the translated language that exactly matches the word in the original Hebrew or Greek. So, they choose a word or phrase that most closely matches the original. For example, the Hebrew word for ‘virgin’ is the same as the Hebrew word for ‘young lady’. (At that time, a woman was not considered a ‘young woman’ unless they were still a virgin.) Another is the Hebrew word for ‘servant’ is the same as the Hebrew word for ‘slave’. One must tell from the context which is meant.

Over time, the meanings of some words may change slightly. So, for example, the older KJV translation uses the word ‘repent’ in some places where the newer NIV uses the word ‘relent’.

Another challenge is that the syntax of a language may be different. Another example is that a common custom 4000 years ago may sound very strange today. So, some translators, right or wrong, try translating the idea rather than the exact words.

But there is one criticism of the bible that is false. Some claim that today’s bibles, such as the KJV and NIV, were translations of translations of translations and therefore are filled with translation errors. That is false. These versions, as well as some others, were created by translating from the original Hebrew and Greek texts, not from some other language.

Now there are some different Greek and Hebrew texts. Generally, translators prefer the oldest texts because there is less chance of an error when the copy was made. But the texts, being on old scrolls, may have parts which are missing. Therefore, scholars have created complete copies of the Old and New Testaments in the original Hebrew and Greek. Then others translate from them. There are different versions of these Greek and Hebrew texts because of difference in

opinion on what were the best originals. But as mentioned before, only about 1 in 90 words are different in the original texts and the differences are minor, like the difference between 'but' and 'however'.

Small Words Matter

One must read each word of the bible very carefully because even the tense (past, present, future) can teach us something about God and us. For example, notice the word "am" in the following passage and how important it is in the teaching of life after physical death.

Matthew

022:023 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

022:024 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

022:025 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

022:026 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

022:027 And last of all the woman died also.

022:028 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

022:029 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

022:030 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

022:031 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

022:032 I **am** the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

In the same way, consider the following passage and what it implies about when human life begins.

Luke

001:013 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

001:014 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

001:015 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; **and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.**

Newer translations use phrases like 'even before he is born'. So, what does this say or imply about the beginning of life? Small words matter.

Reliability of Bible Copies

Some have questioned the accuracy of the bible as it was copied over the centuries. Remember, the printing press was invented in 1440. Prior to that, books had to be copied by hand. Some have questioned how many errors may have crept in during that process. Some others have claimed people may have intentionally introduced errors.

There are actually over 5000 ancient copies of the Greek New Testament. The earliest copy that contains most of the New Testament is from 350AD, and there are fragments even earlier than that. If one compares the ancient texts, only about 1 word in 90 is different and those differences do not affect the meaning of the passage. These are minor differences, like the difference between 'but' and 'however'.

There are a total of over 15,000 ancient copies of the New Testament in various languages. But since the New Testament was written in Greek, it is from the ancient Greek texts that the bible is translated.

Similarly, when Jewish scholars copied the Old Testament, they were required to re-write a 2 page segment if they made any error copying it. This insured its reliability. And if one compares the Dead Seas copy of Isaiah with the next oldest copy, which is from about 900AD, there are virtually no differences and the differences which exist are not significant.

False Teachers

There are a lot of false teachers in the world and the bible even warns us about them. Notice the following passage.

1 John

004:001 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

004:002 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

004:003 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

So, this seems that any group that claims to believe in Jesus 'is of God'. But one must determine exactly what they believe. For example, some have claimed that Jesus did not perform miracles. Some claim Jesus was only human. Others claim Jesus only staged His death and resurrection. Some, like the Mormons, even believe Jesus was created by God (which conflicts with Micah 5:2, John 1:1-3, Isaiah 43:10). And they try to justify their beliefs by cherry picking bible verses and falsely claiming the bible is flawed. So, it is important to know exactly what they believe and if it conflicts with what the bible says about Jesus.

This is nothing new. See what Paul wrote in the first century to the Galatians.

Galatians

001:006 I marvel that ye are So, soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

001:007 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

001:008 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

001:009 As we said before, So, say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

001:010 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

001:011 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

001:012 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

And Paul issued a similar warning to the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians

011:002 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

011:003 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, So, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

011:004 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

- 011:005 For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.
- 011:006 But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been throughly made manifest among you in all things.
- 011:007 Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?
- 011:008 I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.
- 011:009 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and So, will I keep myself.
- 011:010 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.
- 011:011 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.
- 011:012 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.
- 011:013 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.
- 011:014 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.
- 011:015 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

This is why it is important for us to 'try every spirit'. Is the preacher a born-again, Spirit filled believer, who holds to the inerrancy of the Bible? If person is a born again believer, that preacher will speak to their heart and the listener will be lead in their heart to know whether the preacher is speaking truth. Notice what Jesus said regarding born-again believers in the last days.

Matthew

- 024:021 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.
- 024:022 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.
- 024:023 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.
- 024:024 **For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.**
- 024:025 Behold, I have told you before.
- 024:026 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.
- 024:027 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; So, shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Just because someone is a scholar, has a doctorate, or wrote a book does not mean they know anything. Anyone scholar who is not born-again, Spirit filled, is a blind guide. Notice what Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees who where the 'scholars' of that day.

Matthew

- 023:013 **But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.
- 023:014 **Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

- 023:015 **Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.
- 023:016 **Woe unto you, ye blind guides,** which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!
- 023:017 **Ye fools and blind:** for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?
- 023:018 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.
- 023:019 **Ye fools and blind:** for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?
- 023:020 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.
- 023:021 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.
- 023:022 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.
- 023:023 **Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.
- 023:024 **Ye blind guides,** which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.
- 023:025 **Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.
- 023:026 **Thou blind Pharisee,** cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.
- 023:027 **Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.
- 023:028 Even So, ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.
- 023:029 **Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,
- 023:030 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.
- 023:031 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.
- 023:032 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.
- 023:033 **Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers,** how can ye escape the damnation of hell?
- 023:034 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:
- 023:035 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.
- 023:036 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.
- 023:037 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!
- 023:038 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.
- 023:039 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Matthew

- 015:012 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?
- 015:013 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

015:014 Let them alone: **they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.**

Same is true today. Why will those born-again believers not be deceived? Because they are led by the Spirit of God.

John

016:013 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

John

010:027 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

Romans

008:014 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

1 Corinthians

002:001 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

002:002 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

002:003 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

002:004 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

002:005 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

002:006 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

002:007 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

002:008 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

002:009 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

002:010 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

002:011 **For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even So, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.**

002:012 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

002:013 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

002:014 **But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**

002:015 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

002:016 **For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ**

Sin of Unbelief – Not Believing God's Word

Genesis

- 003:001 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?
- 003:002 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:
- 003:003 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.
- 003:004 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:
- 003:005 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.
- 003:006 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.
- 003:007 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

It all comes back to this first sin of Eve – not believing God. There are people who claim there are errors in the bible. They have different reasons for this statement. Some claim errors in translation or copying the bible. Some claim there are errors because sinful humans wrote the bible. Some claim the bible has contradictions. But it all comes back to not believing God – the same sin as Eve.

There are books on the topic of bible contradictions and errors and some are written by true Christians who point out the flaws in arguments that the bible has errors. This writer suggests that those who are interested in this subject, look for those books, written by Christians, who explain the flawed logic.

Those who argue there are errors in the bible also do not understand what it is to be born again, as John writes,

1 John

- 001:006 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

The Bible Is Incomprehensible To Some

The bible cannot be understood by many people. For more on this, please see the section entitle, “Behind the Veil – The Bible is a Sealed/Incomprehensible Book To Some”

Books Of Bible Chosen By The Holy Spirit

The bible that is used today contains 66 ‘books’ – 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.

Some attack the bible questioning the books that were included in it. Some say there should be more, some less. Some pointed out that different churches accepted different books in the bible at different times. So, how did the bible come to contain 66 books?

The Old Testament books were selected by Jewish scholars by the time of Jesus.

The New Testament books were written after Jesus’s ascension around 29AD. Besides the divinely inspired book. Other, spurious books were written which were not divinely inspired. These caused heresies. Over time, it became clear to true Christians which were inspired and which were not. The Council of Rome in 382 came up with the list of divinely inspired books, including those in the New Testament.

So how did the Christians know which were divinely inspired? In a similar way that God inspired them to be written in the first place.

All true, born-again Christians have the Holy Spirit in them. Some have a greater sensitivity to Him. Those who lead sinful lives may grieve the Holy Spirit and lose that closeness.

Notice what the bible says about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and how He leads.

Luke

012:012 **For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.**

John

010:025 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

010:026 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

010:027 **My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:**

010:028 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

010:029 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

010:030 I and my Father are one.

John

014:016 **And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;**

014:017 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; **for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you**

John

014:023 **Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.**

014:024 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

014:025 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

014:026 **But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.**

John

015:026 **But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:**

015:027 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

John

016:007 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

016:008 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
016:009 Of sin, because they believe not on me;
016:010 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;
016:011 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.
016:012 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.
016:013 **Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:** for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.
016:014 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.
016:015 **All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.**

Acts

001:005 For John truly baptized with water; **but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.**
001:006 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?
001:007 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.
001:008 **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:** and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Romans

008:009 **But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if So, be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.**
008:010 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.
008:011 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.
008:012 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.
008:013 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.
008:014 **For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.**
008:015 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.
008:016 **The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:**

Romans

008:026 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
008:027 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God

1 John

002:027 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

2 Corinthians

013:014 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.
Amen

Martin Luther did not believe 3 books (Hebrews, James and Jude) did not belong in the bible because they seemed to contradict the bible's teaching in

Ephesians

002:008 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

002:009 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

because those books seemed to teach that people are saved by their good works (how they lived). However, he misunderstood what those books were saying. In fairness, probably every Christian and every great Christian scholar has misunderstood some passages. For example, look at the disagreement Christians have today about communion, the rapture, and the like.

Bible Study Tools

Some people with questions about the bible do not know how to study the bible or look up answers on their own. So, this section is devoted to giving suggestions on how to do this.

Formal Bible Study

It is important to study the entire bible. In some ways, the bible is like a mosaic or jigsaw puzzle, each piece is important and each complements another. It is helpful to be part of a formal bible study, especially if one has not read or studied the entire bible yet.

Thru The Bible ministries has a great 5 year bible study that broadcasts for free on the radio and internet 5 days a week, Monday thru Friday. It takes 5 years to go thru the entire bible but is well worth it. They also allow you to download the entire study to your PC for free. They also broadcast a question and answer program on Saturdays and a sermon on Sunday. The study was created by Dr. JV McGee. Although he passed away in the late 1980's, his program is so popular that it is still rebroadcast and even expanded into over 250 languages around the world. I am not part of that ministry but like it and recommend it.

Their website is www.ttb.org. Their phone app is free and is called Thru The Bible. One can go to their website to find what radio station broadcasts the program in their area.

Bible Commentaries

Although Thru The Bible teaches on almost every bible verse, it is sometimes helpful to have a written bible commentary for study. Thru The Bible sells Dr. McGee's commentary in book form.

Another great commentary is put out by Enduring Word and can be freely used on the internet. To access that bible commentary, enter the following on your web browser.

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/xxxxx-99/>

where xxxxx is the name of the book and 99 is the chapter number. So, for example if one wants to view the commentary on Genesis chapter 22, they would enter

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/genesis-22/>

Once again, it is very good and it is free.

www.biblehub.com also allows people to view various bible commentaries online. One option they offer is to look up the original Hebrew or Greek wording of the text with a word by word translation. This can be useful when 2 English translations differ in a verse and one wants to know what was in the original Hebrew/Greek text. To do this, enter the following in the web browser.

<https://biblehub.com/xx/88-99.htm>

Where xxxxx is the book, 88 is the chapter and 99 is the verse. So, to look up 2 Peter 1:20, one would enter

https://biblehub.com/2_peter/1-20.htm

Web Searches of Verses or Topics

Sometimes people remember part of a bible verse but do not remember what book/chapter/verse it is in. This can be easily found by doing a search on the internet – even if the person cannot remember the exact wording of the verse. To do this, enter the following on the browser's search line

Bible xxxxx

Where xxxxx is the portion of the bible verse one remembers. For example, suppose one wants to find out what bible verse contains 'for God So, loved the world', they could do a search on

Bible for God So, loved the world

And the search engine would return a list including John 3:16

The same can be done for a given topic. Just substitute the topic for xxxxx.

Need a Bible?

Various web sites allow people to read the bible for free. One I like is

<https://www.biblegateway.com/reading-plans/>

One can select to read from a large list of bible versions for free. My personal favorites are KJV, NKJV and NIV. The website also offers study plans for a fee.

Bible Contradiction Books

Some people insist there are contradictions and errors in the bible. As stated earlier, the bible does not contradict itself and there are no errors in the original Hebrew and Greek texts. But some people insist there are. For the interested reader, there are books which identify many of these 'contradictions' or 'controversies' along with the explanation why they are not really contradictions. One can use the internet to find books on this topic. Some of the books include

- Demolishing Supposed Bible Contradictions volume 1 by Ken Ham
- Demolishing Supposed Bible Contradictions volume 2 by Ken Ham, Bodie Hodge, Tim Chaffey
- The Big Book of Bible Difficulties by Norman L. Geisler, Thomas Howe

This writer does not always agree with some of the explanations. However, they are possible explanations to controversies and supposed contradictions. There are other books too, including some which only describe the controversy and do not include any possible explanations. This writer suggests avoiding those books unless the reader plans to devote time to find the explanation themselves. Remember, Eve's original sin was to doubt God.

Genesis

003:001 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

003:002 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

003:003 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

003:004 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

003:005 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

003:006 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

003:007 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

003:008 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

So, Eve and Adam doubted God, ate the fruit and sinned. It all stemmed from doubting God. That is why it can be dangerous to learn of 'controversies' without doing research why they are false.

Church History Books and Videos

There are a number of movies and videos which present good insight into church history. Some of them are listed below.

- Luther, starring Joseph Fiennes and Sir Peter Ustinov is a movie account of the Reformation. This movie gives insight into both the conflicts within the Roman Catholic church and the efforts of Martin Luther to correct the church's teachings. It gives a fairly balanced picture.
- A Lamp In The Dark – A documentary about church history - its martyrs and translating the bible.
- Tares Among The Wheat – A documentary about the Codex Sinaiticus. Controversial.
- Bridge to Babylon – Documentary about 2 scholars who questioned the KJV translation of the bible. Controversial.

Fox's Book of Martyrs discusses Christian martyrs. A large part of the book describes the persecution of Protestants by corrupt Roman Catholic church hierarchy 500 years ago. It is good insight into why people emigrated to America.

Pray and Meditate

We also need to pray to the Father and ask Him that the Holy Spirit may give us understanding. Sometimes getting full understanding can take a long time, because some bible passages have more meaning as we age, or as we encounter different people or situations which give us a fuller understanding of a passage.

Other Material

Some ask if there is any historical secular writing regarding the life of Jesus. The answer is 'yes' and can be found in the book "The Historical Jesus" by Dr. Gary R. Habermas.

The video, "Who Is This Jesus" with Dr. DJ Kennedy, has additional material on the reliability of the bible. This is an older video and may be difficult to locate.

Some question the accuracy of certain bible passages why they are compared with Roman histories. But the question can also be asked, was there a mistake in the histories? Was there a mistake in a Roman stone table?

Short Background on the Bible and Christianity

Bible Basics

This write up was written for a Christian reader. However, some who read this may not be Christian and may be a little confused by a few things. So, this section provides a little background on the bible and Christianity.

The bible is divided into 66 'books'. Some mostly contain history. Some are mostly prophesy. Others are mostly instruction.

The first 5 books were written by Moses and contain history from the beginning of the world until the time the Israelis entered Palestine. They are not meant to be science books or detailed anthropological works. They only contain the information that God deemed important from a spiritual viewpoint.

These books contain the stories of mankind's fall into sin and the promise of a savior. They contain stories of Abraham who is the father of the nation of Israel. And they contain the story of his nephew, Lot, and the corruption of his family. They contain the story of the Jews leaving Egypt and going to Palestine.

The following books contain the stories of the conquest of Palestine by the Jews, their forsaking of God and turning to idols, and God's punishment. Initially, the nation of Israel was governed by prophets. Later they were ruled by kings. Eventually the country was conquered because of their idolatry.

There is then a 400 year gap in the biblical books until Jesus came. The first 4 books of the 'new testament' talk of Jesus' life, death and resurrection from the dead. The fifth book talks about the early history of the Christian Church. Most of the remaining books are letters of instruction which the Apostles (those closest to Jesus) sent to the early Christian churches. The last book was written approximately 100AD.

Books were chosen for the bible thru inspiration/guidance by the Holy Spirit.

So what do Christians believe?

God is a trinity – three persons with a special bond or union or communion, and they are one God. Saint Patrick liken the Trinity to a clover which has 3 leaves – three leaves yet one clover. Another theologian likened the Trinity to blue, yellow and red light which, when shown together, produce white light. But no analogy is really good. They are referred to as the Father, the Son or Jesus or Christ, and the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost. God is eternal (no beginning or end), all knowing, and all powerful.

People have a beginning at conception. Each of us is a spirit/soul which lives/dwells in a body. At death, our spirit either goes to heaven or hell and our bodies return to the earth (buried, cremated, etc). Someday, God will 'resurrect' the dead and give each person a new body.

The 'old testament' (the first 39 books of the bible written before Jesus) have many prophecies of the coming of a savior (Jesus). Why a savior? Because when we are born into this world, we are cut off from God, similar to how a branch or leaf can be cut off from a vine. The cutoff branch or leaf may look healthy. But it will die because it is not in the vine. We are cutoff from God. Someone had to pay the penalty for sin (hell) and that was Jesus. We can be one with Jesus thru faith in Him. That is what makes people right with God.

John

003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

There is a heaven and a hell. People who believe in Jesus go to heaven. How one lives their life determines the kind of reward they get in heaven or the punishment they get in hell. But it does not affect if they go to heaven or hell.

Ephesians

002:008 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

002:009 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Some Christians believe a person immediately go to heaven or hell when they die. Catholics believe a person first goes to a place called 'purgatory' when they die. Other Christians believe a person goes to either 'paradise' or 'a place of torment' when they die, awaiting for the end of days when all will be judged.

Different Branches of Christianity

Christians can be divided into 3 broad groups. They are

- Roman Catholics
- Greek Orthodox Catholics
- Protestants

Each of these groups can be broken down into 2 subcategories. They are

- Conservatives
- Liberals

Evangelicals are generally Protestant Conservatives.

Conservatives believe that the bible is God's word, without error, and without contradiction. Liberals do not agree with this. Liberals generally do not believe in miracles and that affects how they interpret the bible. Some question if Liberal Christians are really Christians, or if they are really apostates.

Different Bible Translations

The bible was originally written in Hebrew and Greek, with a small amount of Aramaic, under the inspiration of God. The early Church identified writings that should be included in the bible per the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Church split into 2 during the Dark Ages. They became the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Catholic churches, each with their own pope or leader. The Roman Catholic church used a bible that was translated into Latin. The Greek Orthodox used the original Greek and Hebrew texts.

Constantinople was in the area of the world where the Greek Orthodox church was predominant. When the city was conquered by the Turks, many of their scholars took their texts and moved west and got jobs teaching in universities. The Greek texts were translated into Latin and then it was noticed they sometimes differed from the Latin Vulgate bible the Roman Catholic church used. This was part of the basis for the reformation (start of Protestantism). The Roman Catholic church continued to defend the Vulgate bible. Then around 1840, some new Greek copies of the bible were found in Egypt and many believed these were older Greek texts than what was used by the Greek Orthodox church, although there no objective proof is given.

The King James Version (translation) of the bible was completed in 1611 and used the Greek Orthodox texts for translation. Most 20th century translations of the bible used the other Greek texts. So, what is the best English translation?

This writer believes the Greek texts used for the 1611 translation are better for the following reasons.

- There are about 5000 of the “ancient” texts which are 99% in agreement with each other. Some of these were used in the 1611 English translation. The differences are generally very minor.
- There are about 50 of the “ancient” texts from Egypt which are about 70% in agreement.
- Egypt was known for its Gnosticism. And Gnostics were known to sometime corrupt texts.
- There is no definitive proof that the Greek texts found in 1844 are older or better.

However, newer translations like the NIV are very good and easier to read. Also, the English language has changed in the past 400+ years. So, where as the KJV uses phrases like “God repented”, the NIV uses phrases like “God relented” which is better.

Personally, I use the NIV for general reading. I use the KJV when studying a topic in more detail.

John Smith Jr., who founded Mormonism, rewrote much of the bible because he claimed scholars in the early church deliberately corrupted the texts when copying them. However, some of the books he claimed were corrupted were found as part of the Dead Sea Scrolls which were written before the early church. So, his claim does not stand up. Also, Mormonism contradicts biblical teachings, such as, Jesus is eternal – without beginning or end. Mormons believe Jesus was created/born, which is false and contradicts the bible – Micah 5:2.

Overview – National Sin

The bible teaches us that not only do individual people sin, but entire nations can sin and be held accountable to God for it. This is discussed in other sections of this write up, especially in the Judgement Examples presented later. But notice what the book of Leviticus in the bible teaches.

In Leviticus, God gave the Hebrews religious rituals which they should follow. And these rituals have a lot of symbolism. They included sacrifices which were symbols of Jesus's sacrifice that was to come.

Now notice the following passage which is a ritual to be followed when "the whole congregation of Israel" was to follow when they repented of a sin. Notice this is not a ritual for an individual's sin. It is a ritual when "the whole congregation of Israel" sinned. And it applied for sins of ignorance, when they did something against God's will without knowing. The point is, "the whole congregation of Israel" is the nation. And this is the ritual they were to follow when repenting of a sin. There would be no such ritual if there was no such thing as a national sin.

Leviticus

004:013 And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty;

004:014 When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.

004:015 And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD: and the bullock shall be killed before the LORD.

004:016 And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation:

004:017 And the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD, even before the veil.

004:018 And he shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar which is before the LORD, that is in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

004:019 And he shall take all his fat from him, and burn it upon the altar.

004:020 And he shall do with the bullock as he did with the bullock for a sin offering, So, shall he do with this: and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.

004:021 And he shall carry forth the bullock without the camp, and burn him as he burned the first bullock: it is a sin offering for the congregation.

The above passage is also applicable to other 'congregations' such as a state, province, city, or even a mob of people.

Now the following passage follows the one above. But this passage discusses the ritual when a ruler repents. Now there is another passage discussing a sacrifice for when individuals sin. But since this one is for rulers only, it implies that this is a sin they committed in their office, in the act of being a ruler.

Leviticus

004:022 When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD his God concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty;

004:023 Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish:

004:024 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD: it is a sin offering.

- 004:025 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering.
- 004:026 And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar, as the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.
- 004:027 And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty;
- 004:028 Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned.
- 004:029 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.
- 004:030 And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar.
- 004:031 And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the LORD; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.
- 004:032 And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish.
- 004:033 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering.
- 004:034 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar:
- 004:035 And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

These passages help make it clear that there are national sins.

Overview - Summary of God's Rule and Judgment

God judges the world and nations. Many people do not believe this, but that is what the Bible teaches. The Bible had many examples in which God rules in the world and judges nations. But perhaps the best summary of this can be found in the book of Second Peter, verses 4-6.

2 Peter

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly;

And again in the following passage

1 Corinthians

010:005 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

010:006 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

010:007 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

010:008 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

010:009 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

010:010 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

010:011 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

010:012 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Luke

013:001 There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

013:002 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?

013:003 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

013:004 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

013:005 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Many people dismiss the biblical stories as being not relevant. Others say they are warnings to the Israelies. They are wrong as shown in these passages. And these passages show that these stories are meant for both Jews and Gentiles, both back then and today.

(For people who are not familiar with the bible, the bible teaches that Satan and his devils were once holy angels who served God but were cast out of heaven for sinning. The bible also teaches that God killed off mankind with the exception of Noah and his family because they rejected God and no longer believed in Him. The bible also teaches that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by God, with the exception of Lot and his family, because of their gross immorality and lack of charity.)

In some cases, like the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, God waited until the few remaining good people left before punishing those cities.

But in many cases, probably most, where God punished a country, there was a small remnant who were true to God. (See 1 Kings 19 verse 18.) And yet the whole country suffered.

1 Kings

019:018 Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

These are just a few of many stories in the Bible that are there to teach us lessons, as is stated in the following:

Romans

015:004 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

2 Timothy

003:016 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

003:017 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The following passage was given to the nation of Israel.

1 Kings

009:006 But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them:

009:007 Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and **Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people:**

009:008 And at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house?

009:009 And they shall answer, Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil.

These stories are recorded for us as an example of how God rules and judges So, that we have a warning.

And what does it mean to “live ungodly”? It simply means those who reject God and those who live ungodly, self-centered lives.

But the Bible also teaches that God can protect the godly even when punishing an evil nation.

2 Peter

002:009 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

And the Bible teaches He will spare a nation if it turns to Him. The following story is an example. Only selected verses are listed to keep it short.

Jonah

001:001 Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

001:002 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

Jonah

003:001 And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

003:002 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

003:003 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.

003:004 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

003:005 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

Jonah

003:010 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Please note that this translation is 400 years old. The term ‘repented of the evil’ would be better translated today as ‘did not bring the destruction He threatened’.

So, what are these “national sins” for which God has punished countries? The following is a summary of some of the major reasons.

1. Rejection of God. That is, non-belief.
2. Conquering other nations, especially for enrichment
3. Lack of charity.
4. Committing abominations that were condoned by the state.

Rejection of God

There are many passages on this. The following is just one of them.

Deuteronomy

008:019 And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.

008:020 As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, So, shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.

There are other examples. So, why does God not judge nations which have few true Christians? Because God gives nations time to turn to Him. More detail is given later.

Conquering Other Nations

The book of Habakkuk records the reason for God's condemnation of the Babylonians

Habakkuk

002:005 Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:

002:006 Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!

002:007 Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them?

002:008 Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

Lack of Charity

The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by God for their wickedness. The following passages give the reasons why the cities were destroyed.

Ezekiel

016:049 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

016:050 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.

Another bible passage also alludes to why these cities were destroyed.

Jude

001:007 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

National Abominations

And what are these abominations? They are listed in numerous Bible passages including the following:

Deuteronomy

018:009 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

018:010 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch.

018:011 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

018:012 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Deuteronomy

012:031 Thou shalt not do So, unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

Deuteronomy

004:024 For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

004:025 When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of anything, and shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger:

004:026 I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

004:027 And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you.

004:028 And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

Deuteronomy

004:029 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

004:030 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice;

004:031 (For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them.

Deuteronomy

009:004 Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee.

009:005 Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

009:006 Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.

This is God's world and He gives the land to whomever He pleases. The following verses are more examples of this. Note Deut 7:4 which gives the reason why other nations were cast off the land. Note Lev. 18:21-30, it tells of the immorality of the people who were to be cast off the land. Note verse 21 tells of sacrificing children by placing them in fire. Note Deuteronomy 8:20 God warns Israel they will also be destroyed if they do likewise.

Why was there a delay in when God gave Abraham the promise of Palestine and when they actually went into it? Remember, they spent 400 years in Egypt. See the answer in Gen 15:13-16 – especially the last phrase in verse 16. Notice God gave the Amorites 400 years to change their ways. Where the Amorites, etc, ignorant of God and their pending judgment? No. Notice Josh 2:9-11 states they knew Israel's God was the true God for at least 40 years and they could have turned to God and be spared like the harlot Rahab.

Deuteronomy

004:037 And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt;

004:038 To drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy

006:010 And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not,

006:011 And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;

006:012 Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage

Deuteronomy

007:001 When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

007:002 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

007:003 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

007:004 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: So, will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

Deuteronomy

008:020 As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, So, shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy

009:004 Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee.

009:005 Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Leviticus

018:021 And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

018:022 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

018:023 Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.

018:024 Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you:

018:025 And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.

018:026 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you:

018:027 (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;)

018:028 That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.

018:029 For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people.

018:030 Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God.

The following verse gives some interesting insight into God's judgment. In Genesis, God promises Abram the land of Palestine. But God does not give it to him immediately. One of the reasons is stated in verse 16 as, "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full". The Amorites occupied the land and God was giving them extra time to repent. Did they repent? See the passage in Joshua below for the answer.

Genesis

015:013 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

015:014 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

015:015 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

015:016 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full

When the Israelis entered the land about 400 years later, they met a woman who lived there and said the following.

Joshua

002:009 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

002:010 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

002:011 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

Notice that the people who lived in Palestine knew for many years that the Israelis were coming and their God was the true God (notice the phrase 'your God' in verse 11). But they did not turn to the one true God. Instead, they lived in fear and were later defeated by the Israelis.

The Bible does talk about how countries sin. Countries can persecute good people, pass laws that favor the rich at the expense of the poor. And the culture of a country can be corrupt where people are so committed to immorality that God will punish them.

God even prescribed a special sacrifice for the nation of Israel if it sinned as a nation.

Leviticus

004:013 And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty;

004:014 When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.

And there was a special sacrifice if the leader sinned

Leviticus

004:022 When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD his God concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty;

004:023 Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish:

One final point... God shows great patience with nations. Nations should not become complacent because punishment has not come. The Israelis left Egypt with Moses about 1491BC. They entered the promised land about 1451BC. From that point until about 1095BC was the time of the judges in Israel. The period from 1095BC until about 397BC was the

period of the kings. During the periods of the judges and the kings, the people abandoned God's ways, God punished them, and they returned – usually. There were short periods where they were ruled by foreign powers. But it took over 1000 years before God completely took their nation from them and they were ruled by foreign powers.

Overview - National Blessings For Obeying God And Curses For Not

What is interesting is that God declared He would bless the nation of Israel if they diligently followed Him and curses if they did not. Although God did not directly promise this for other nations, there is no reason to believe God would not do this for others.

In the following Bible passages, God declares the blessings if Israel would follow Him.

Deuteronomy

- 011:010 For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs:
- 011:011 But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven:
- 011:012 A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.
- 011:013 And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,
- 011:014 That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.
- 011:015 And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full.
- 011:016 Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;
- 011:017 And then the LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

Deuteronomy

- 028:001 And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:
- 028:002 And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.
- 028:003 Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.
- 028:004 Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.
- 028:005 Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.
- 028:006 Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.
- 028:007 The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.
- 028:008 The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.
- 028:009 The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.

028:010 And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee.

028:011 And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

028:012 The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

It is repeated in Leviticus

Leviticus

026:001 Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God.

026:002 Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

026:003 If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;

026:004 Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

026:005 And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

026:006 And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.

026:007 And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword.

026:008 And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

026:009 For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.

026:010 And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new.

026:011 And I set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you.

026:012 And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.

026:013 I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.

In the following Bible passage, God declares curses when the nation did not obey Him.

Deuteronomy

028:015 But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

028:016 Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.

028:017 Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.

028:018 Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

028:019 Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

- 028:020 The LORD shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.
- 028:021 The LORD shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it.
- 028:022 The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.
- 028:023 And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.
- 028:024 The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.
- 028:025 The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.
- 028:026 And thy carcase shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away.
- 028:027 The LORD will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.
- 028:028 The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart:
- 028:029 And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee.
- 028:030 Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof.
- 028:031 Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them.
- 028:032 Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long; and there shall be no might in thine hand.
- 028:033 The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway:
- 028:034 So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.
- 028:035 The LORD shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.
- 028:036 The LORD shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.
- 028:037 And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.
- 028:038 Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in; for the locust shall consume it.
- 028:039 Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them, but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them.

- 028:040 Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast his fruit.
- 028:041 Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity.
- 028:042 All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.
- 028:043 The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.
- 028:044 He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.
- 028:045 Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:
- 028:046 And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.
- 028:047 Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;
- 028:048 Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.
- 028:049 The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;
- 028:050 A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:
- 028:051 And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.
- 028:052 And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.
- 028:053 And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:
- 028:054 So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave:
- 028:055 So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates.
- 028:056 The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter,
- 028:057 And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.
- 028:058 If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD;
- 028:059 Then the LORD will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.

- 028:060 Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee.
- 028:061 Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.
- 028:062 And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.
- 028:063 And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; So, the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.
- 028:064 And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.
- 028:065 And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:
- 028:066 And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:
- 028:067 In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.
- 028:068 And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.

And it is repeated in Leviticus

Leviticus

- 026:014 But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;
- 026:015 And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, So, that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant:
- 026:016 I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.
- 026:017 And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.
- 026:018 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.
- 026:019 And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:
- 026:020 And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.
- 026:021 And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.
- 026:022 I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate.
- 026:023 And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;
- 026:024 Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

- 026:025 And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.
- 026:026 And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.
- 026:027 And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me;
- 026:028 Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.
- 026:029 And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.
- 026:030 And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcases upon the carcases of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you.
- 026:031 And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours.
- 026:032 And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.
- 026:033 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.
- 026:034 Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.
- 026:035 As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.
- 026:036 And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.
- 026:037 And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.
- 026:038 And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.
- 026:039 And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.

But God promises forgiveness if they return to Him

Leviticus

- 026:040 If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;
- 026:041 And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:
- 026:042 Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.
- 026:043 The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.
- 026:044 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.
- 026:045 But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.
- 026:046 These are the statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

Notice King Solomon's prayer which confirms these teachings.

1 Kings

008:022 And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:

008:023 And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:

008:024 Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day.

008:025 Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; So, that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me.

008:026 And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.

008:027 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

008:028 Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to day:

008:029 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.

008:030 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive.

008:031 If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house:

008:032 Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.

008:033 When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house:

008:034 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.

008:035 **When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:**

008:036 **Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.**

008:037 **If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be;**

008:038 **What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house:**

- 008:039 **Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)**
- 008:040 **That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.**
- 008:041 Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;
- 008:042 (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house;
- 008:043 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.
- 008:044 **If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name:**
- 008:045 **Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.**
- 008:046 **If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, So, that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near;**
- 008:047 **Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;**
- 008:048 **And So, return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:**
- 008:049 **Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause,**
- 008:050 **And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them:**
- 008:051 **For they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron:**
- 008:052 That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee.
- 008:053 For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O LORD God.
- 008:054 And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.

Prophecy of Future Judgment

The following prophecy was given to the nation of Israel after the above section in Deuteronomy. It warned them that a future generation would rebel and be forced out of the land of Palestine because they left the one true God. Verses 22-26 sound like a current fulfillment of the prophecy because Palestine is no longer a nation 'flowing with milk and honey' as described in Moses' time.

Deuteronomy

- 029:020 The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven.
- 029:021 And the LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law:
- 029:022 So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the LORD hath laid upon it;
- 029:023 And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:
- 029:024 Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?
- 029:025 Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt:
- 029:026 For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them:

The following prophecy is yet to be fulfilled. Notice the curse in verse 7 below. It should be a warning to all nations that would oppress Israel.

Deuteronomy

- 030:001 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,
- 030:002 And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;
- 030:003 That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.
- 030:004 If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:

Deuteronomy

- 030:005 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.
- 030:006 And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.
- 030:007 And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.

030:008 And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.

030:009 And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:

Overview - God In Charge

Some people question God's authority in the world. They question whether what God does with/in this world is just. But God reminds us in this passage that the world and the people of it belong to Him.

Psalms

024:001 The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

Job

038:001 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

038:002 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

038:003 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

038:004 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

Job

040:001 Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said,

040:002 Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

Job

040:006 Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

040:007 Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto Me.

040:008 Wilt thou also disannul My judgment? wilt thou condemn Me, that thou mayest be righteous?

Psalms

047:007 For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.

047:008 God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness.

Isaiah

055:008 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

055:009 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So, are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Overview - God in Control

There are numerous passages in which God declares He is in control. But the way God controls events can be subtle, not obvious. The following passages give some insight into this.

2 Chronicles records how Israel split into 2 countries – Israel and Judah. In the following passage, God declares He caused this split.

2 Chronicles

011:004 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren: return every man to his house: for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the LORD, and returned from going against Jeroboam.

Proverbs

021:001 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will.

In the above passage, one may wonder how God controls a king's heart. Somethings God forces a situation on a nation and that forces a king to make a decision.

Proverbs

016:009 A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

Psalms

033:010 The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: He maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

The following psalm speaks of Christ's millennial reign on the earth after the great tribulation period. Once again, this passage states God is in control. He causes the end of wars.

Psalms

046:006 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: He uttered his voice, the earth melted.

046:007 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

046:008 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations He hath made in the earth.

046:009 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire.

The following Bible passage is prophetic. It speaks of a future time. But it has an interesting message for us today. We sometimes think people or rules formed the nations of the world. But the following Bible passage states God made the nations.

Psalms

086:009 All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord; and shall glorify Thy name.

The following passage tells the story how God told the prophet Jeremiah to go to a potter's house and observe the work he was doing. The potter tried making a vessel. But it was defective So, the potter tried again. Then God says the nation of Israel was the clay and God was the potter. The moral of the story is, God tries to shape a country. But the condition of the clay determines if the vessel is good. Just like a potter, if vessel is defective, the potter will start over with that clay and try to form something. If the clay is no good, the potter may throw it away and start with some other clay. The following is a warning that God is in control, and if a nation is defective, God can do with it as a potter does with his clay.

Jeremiah

018:001 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

018:002 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

018:003 Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.

018:004 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: So, he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

018:005 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

018:006 O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, So, are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

The following was spoken by the prophet Daniel. Notice verse 21 which states that God is the one who removes and sets up kings.

Daniel

002:020 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

002:021 And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

Notice the highlighted portion in the verse below. To phrase it another way, God gives nations the leaders they deserve, or the least common denominator.

Daniel

004:017 This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

This is also stated in Proverbs

Proverbs

008:012 I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

008:013 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

008:014 Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength.

008:015 By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

008:016 By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

This point is So, important that it is actually stated 3 times in Daniel. The following is when Daniel was asked to read the hand writing on the wall for the grandson of king Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel

005:017 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

005:018 O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:

005:019 And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.

005:020 But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

005:021 And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

Overview - The Land Belongs to God - We Are Only Tenants

The Land And All In It Belongs To God

God promised that Israel certain lands. However, God declared that the land is His and they are allowed to live there. This principle is true of all lands – both those of the Israelies and those of other peoples.

Leviticus

025:023 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

The following passages takes this principle to a greater degree. In it, the bible declares the earth and everything in it, including people, belong to Him.

Psalms

024:001 The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

Deuteronomy

010:014 Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.

Psalms

089:011 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

089:012 The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.

Exodus

009:029 And Moses said unto him, As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the LORD; and the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know how that the earth is the LORD's.

Exodus

019:003 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

019:004 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

019:005 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

019:006 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

All belong to God, even the animals

Psalms

050:007 Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God.

050:008 I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before me.

050:009 I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds.

050:010 For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

050:011 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.

There are more bible verses on this topic. But these should suffice.

We Are Only Tenants Of The Land

Leviticus

025:023 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

The following is a parable that Jesus taught. In it, He teaches that the world is owned by God and the people are its tenants, not its owners. And in this parable, Jesus taught that God has the right to case a people out of a land when they reject God.

Mark

012:001 And he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

012:002 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

012:003 And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.

012:004 And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled.

012:005 And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.

012:006 Having yet therefore one son, his wellbeloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

012:007 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be our's.

012:008 And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.

012:009 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

Notice in the next passage, that their staying in the land depended on their relationship with God. Notice especially verse 64.

Deuteronomy

028:058 If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD;

028:059 Then the LORD will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.

028:060 Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee.

028:061 Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

028:062 And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.

028:063 And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; So, the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

- 028:064 And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.
- 028:065 And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:
- 028:066 And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:

God Often Uses Evil Nations To Punish Other Nations

The bible also teaches that God often uses evil (not good) nations to punish those which turn their back on God and His will. Notice in the following chapters entitled, "Judgment Example", it is often an evil nation that are used by God for this work. Assyria was one of those nations used by God. Notice what the following passage has to say on this.

Isaiah

- 010:005 O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.
- 010:006 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.
- 010:007 Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.
- 010:008 For he saith, Are not my princes altogether kings?
- 010:009 Is not Calno as Carchemish? is not Hamath as Arpad? is not Samaria as Damascus?
- 010:010 As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;
- 010:011 Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, So, do to Jerusalem and her idols?
- 010:012 Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

Notice in verses 5-6 that God says He is using the evil nation Assyria to punish the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel. Then after that is done, God will punish Assyria.

God Is Patient, But Will Judge

God is patient and that is shown time and time again when He punished countries. One example is how God kept the Hebrews in Egypt until His patience with the people living in Canaan came to an end. The following is the message God gave to Abraham, telling him how his heirs would be in Egypt for 400 years.

Genesis

- 015:012 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.
- 015:013 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;
- 015:014 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.
- 015:015 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.
- 015:016 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

Another example of this is the country of Assyria and its capital city, Nineveh. The book of Jonah tells of how God sent Jonah to Nineveh to warn them of their sin and turn to God, otherwise they would be destroyed. This occurred about 862 BC.

Jonah

- 003:001 And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,
 003:002 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.
 003:003 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.
 003:004 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.
 003:005 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.
 003:006 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.
 003:007 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:
 003:008 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.
 003:009 Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?
 003:010 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Some newer translations use the word 'relented' instead of 'repented' in verse 10.

Then about 713 BC, God thru the prophet Nahum announced that Nineveh would be destroyed. The city had fallen away from God and back to its sinful ways. But why did God declare this rather than send another prophet to get the city to repent again? The reason is found in the last verse of the book.

Nahum

- 003:018 Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall dwell in the dust: thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them.
 003:019 There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?

The nation would be destroyed because they reached a point where they would no longer repent, even if a prophet were to preach to them.

Assyria's fall came around 610 BC. So, why did God wait about 100 years after this prophecy to destroy that nation? The following passage gives insight into this.

Nahum

- 001:002 God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.
 001:003 The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

So, in this passage we see that

1. God is slow to get angry
2. God is jealous
3. God takes vengeance on his adversaries
4. God will not acquit, ignore the sins of the wicked

This should be a warning to all of us, and to all countries.

More Current History

We should ask ourselves, when a nation falls or a land is taken over by another, why this occurs? Why did God cause it or allow it to happen? What was the condition of the nation that fell? Was it a godly nation and faithful to God? That is a common reason why nations often fall. This will be gone into more detail in sections entitled, “Judgment Examples”.

A future Prophecy

The following is a future prophecy.

Revelations

019:015 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

019:016 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

See Also...

See also the sections entitled, “Behind the Veil – Coronavirus and Other National/Global Disasters” and “Behind the Veil – God Controls the Weather” and “Behind the Veil - God Uses Evil Nations To Punish Less Wicked Ones” for related topics.

Reminder

Remember, God created the earth and heavens, and they are His.

Genesis

001:001 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The following passage refers to Jesus’s role in the creation. The “Word” is a reference to Jesus.

John

001:001 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

001:002 The same was in the beginning with God.

001:003 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Not only did He create the world, but He also sustains it.

Hebrews

001:001 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

001:002 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

001:003 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

Summary of God's Judgement of Nations

So, why does God kick out the occupants of a land and give it to another? In the following passage, God explains to the Israelis why before they went in to occupy Canaan. The first 6 verses are the summary. But the entire chapter is quoted for those who want to go into more depth. In summary, God kicked out the occupants because of their wickedness. God let the Israelis to occupy it because of a promise, not because they were a great people. It served God's purpose.

Deuteronomy

009:001 **Hear, O Israel: Thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven,**

009:002 **A people great and tall, the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak!**

009:003 **Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: So, shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee.**

009:004 **Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee.**

009:005 **Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**

009:006 **Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.**

009:007 Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD.

009:008 Also in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, So, that the LORD was angry with you to have destroyed you.

009:009 When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water:

009:010 And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.

009:011 And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant.

009:012 And the LORD said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image.

009:013 Furthermore the LORD spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:

- 009:014 Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven: and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they.
- 009:015 So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount burned with fire: and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands.
- 009:016 And I looked, and, behold, ye had sinned against the LORD your God, and had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the LORD had commanded you.
- 009:017 And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes.
- 009:018 And I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.
- 009:019 For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the LORD was wroth against you to destroy you. But the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also.
- 009:020 And the LORD was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him: and I prayed for Aaron also the same time.
- 009:021 And I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, and ground it very small, even until it was as small as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount.
- 009:022 And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibrothhattaavah, ye provoked the LORD to wrath.
- 009:023 Likewise when the LORD sent you from Kadeshbarnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice.
- 009:024 Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.
- 009:025 Thus I fell down before the LORD forty days and forty nights, as I fell down at the first; because the LORD had said he would destroy you.
- 009:026 I prayed therefore unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand.
- 009:027 Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin:
- 009:028 Lest the land whence thou broughtest us out say, Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness.
- 009:029 Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power and by thy stretched out arm

So, when one looks at similar events in history, it is important to remember this passage on why God lets or causes these things to happen. And those people who go in to occupy the land should remember them too lest they should be forced out later. And we should remember when a new occupier enters a land, it is because it serves God's purpose in some way, not that the new occupying people are So, good because they usually are not.

Overview - God Is Accountable To No One

Earlier in this writeup, verses were listed showing that everything was created by God, and belongs to Him. Yet some question God's laws and judgment. They speak as if God is accountable to mankind. How do they do that? One way is to question what the bible teaches. For example, they may cherry pick bible verses to support their beliefs, rather than look at all verses on a subject. For example, some reject the teaching that marriage is between a man and woman by ignoring certain passages. Or they may outright reject some bible passages. For example, I heard there is an organization which looks at bible passages (especially ones quoting Jesus) and vote on whether they are accurate or true. So, in that sense, they are judging God and trying to make Him accountable. Another example is how a US presidential candidate in 2019 stated that churches who did not change reject (change their teaching on) gays should lose their tax free status. This is another example how some people want to rewrite what is in the bible; how some people want to tell God what is right. (NOTE: Please see the first section under the title "Behind the Veil – One Religion Movement" for scripture stating the bible is inerrant. Yes, we may have trouble understanding scripture, but it is true.)

The following are some bible verses on this topic.

Daniel

004:034 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

004:035 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Isaiah

040:017 All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

040:018 To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

Notice how in the following passage (and some others as well), people are likened to clay and as clay pots. That rather shows people their place.

Isaiah

045:009 Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

Jeremiah

018:006 O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, So, are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

018:007 At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it;

018:008 If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

Psalms

135:006 Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

Jeremiah

010:006 Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O LORD; thou art great, and thy name is great in might.

010:007 Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee.

2 Samuel

007:022 Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

(Note regarding the above passage: There are several definitions of the word 'god'. In the above verse, 'God' is meant as a supreme being. In some other passages, the term 'god' refers to idols. In other passages, it refers to whatever is most important in a person's life. In others, the term "god of this world" refers to Satan. And in some places, the term 'god' refers to judges and rulers because in their positions they are acting in/for God.)

The Potter, the Clay, and Predestination

In the following passage, God likens the nation Judah to clay and God as the potter. Notice in verse 4 that the condition of the clay determines what the potter will do with it. What is clay to the potter? Clay is a substance for the potters use and desire. So, it is also with the nation of Judah and So, it is with humankind.

Jeremiah

018:001 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

018:002 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

018:003 Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.

018:004 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: So, he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

018:005 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

018:006 O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, So, are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

018:007 At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it;

018:008 If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

018:009 And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it;

018:010 If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

018:011 Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.

018:012 And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.

018:013 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing.

018:014 Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?

018:015 Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up;

018:016 To make their land desolate, and a perpetual hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head.

018:017 I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity.

The following passage is one that includes teaching about 'predestination'. This is a topic few truly understand. I at best only have a 'feel' for the topic. Basically, some people are 'spiritually blind' and cannot understand anything spiritual.

John

014:017 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

1 Corinthians

002:014 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

2 Corinthians

004:003 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

004:004 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Such people are not condemned because they are spiritually blind. They are condemned because they are sinful.

But what is predestination? In very simplified terms, God is all knowing and He knows who will come to a saving faith in Him.

Romans

009:019 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

009:020 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

009:021 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

009:022 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

009:023 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

Remember, the condition of the clay in part determines what the potter will do with it.

2 Peter

003:009 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Ezekiel

018:032 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

Romans

008:028 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

008:029 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

008:030 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

So, is God good?

Leviticus

011:044 For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Peter

001:015 But as he which hath called you is holy, So, be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

001:016 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

Isaiah

055:008 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

055:009 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So, are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Mark

010:018 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

So yes, God is good. If we do not understand why something is so, or if we do not understand some of God's decrees, or if we disagree, it is not God who is wrong. Our understanding and wisdom is no match to that of God's.

Who is Man? – Someone Whom God Loves

Some of the preceding verses make people sound as if they are nothing. But the bible also teaches that people are loved by God. I prefer the analogy of a parent and an infant. The infant cannot tell the parent what to do. And the parent loves the infant very much.

Psalms

008:003 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

008:004 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Yet God does because He cares for us.

Psalms

144:003 LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

John

003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

003:017 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Overview - Governments Are To Serve God

Exodus

005:001 And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

005:002 And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.

This seems to be the view of most politicians. They believe there should be a strict separation of church and state. They do not believe the bible should be used as guidance on writing laws or guiding a nation. But remember, that in the chapters that follow the above passage, God judged Egypt and sent plagues on Egypt until the Pharaoh relented. But this is just the start of the study. What else does the bible teach on this topic?

President Obama stated in a speech that religious teachings should not be used in making laws. He went on to say, even if you believed one should, then what holy book would you use? And even if you chose the bible, then what interpretation of the bible should be used? He concluded that religious views should not be part of the laws.

Requirement for Rulers and Judges

Noticed the follow passage, especially verses 10 and 11. (Notice verse 7 refers to Jesus resurrection. Verses 8-9 refer to Jesus second coming.)

Psalms

002:001 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

002:002 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

002:003 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

002:004 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.

002:005 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

002:006 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

002:007 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

002:008 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

002:009 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

002:010 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

002:011 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

002:012 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him

There is no compromise.

Luke

004:008 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Matthew

006:024 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Note that the word 'mammon' means money.

And what does it mean to 'serve' God? Notice the following passage, especially verse 4 which sums it up.

Deuteronomy

013:001 If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,

013:002 And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;

013:003 Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

013:004 Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.

Now notice the following passage, especially verse 3.

2 Samuel

023:001 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

023:002 **The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.**

023:003 **The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.**

Notice it says that rulers must rule in fear of God, not voters. And what is the 'fear of God'? Yes, God is all powerful and does punish rebellious people and nations. And that is one meaning of the term. But there is a second meaning too. People, including rulers, should love God So, much that they are afraid of hurting His feelings.

Deuteronomy

017:014 When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me;

017:015 Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.

017:016 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.

017:017 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

017:018 And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites:

017:019 And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:

017:020 That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.

Now notice the following passage. Verse 1 says every soul is subject to the higher powers. But that also implies rulers are subject to God, who is the highest power. Now notice verse 4. It says they are ministers of God to people for good. Their purpose is to do good, not evil. It is wrong for a government official to do harm or evil to someone (not discussing punishment for crimes here).

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

In the above passages, God declares that both kings and judges (ie, rulers and the legal system) must serve and obey God. There are no exceptions. Repeat - There are no exemptions. This is not limited to the nation of Israel. It does not say one can hide behind a nation's constitution and defy God's command. As the apostle Peter said:

Acts

005:029 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Colossians

003:023 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

003:024 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

003:025 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

So, if God says kings and judges are to serve God, then it is best to follow what God says rather than what people may want.

God declares that rulers and judges must serve Him and rule in the fear of Him (ie, according to His will). Period. So, what is the 'fear of God'. It can mean a reverence like one would have for a king. It can also mean to love God So, much one is fearful to hurt His feelings (see also the section entitled Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 1).

Psalms

009:017 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

Psalms

033:012 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

Proverbs

014:034 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

Proverbs

029:002 When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

Many people advocate a separation of Church and state. Some of the reasons include:

There are many examples in history how religious groups have persecuted those who had differing beliefs when the religious leaders had power in the government. Some examples are the European Wars of Religion during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Secular power tended to corrupt religious leaders in those periods.

That is why the First Amendment to the US Constitution was passed. It reads:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

But what is interesting is that it does not use the phrase, “separation of church and state”.

Some interpret this amendment to mean Biblical teachings should not be considered when debating the merits of laws. And some interpret this to mean displays such as listing of the 10 Commandments or nativity scenes should not be allowed on government property.

But notice the exact wording of the amendment. Notice it states that Congress is to make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. It does not state that the morals taught in the Bible cannot be considered when debating the merits of laws. It simply states that Congress cannot establish a state religion and it cannot limit or control religious freedom.

Also, notice the following passage. Probably all Christians pray the Lord’s Prayer. Notice the one phrase in it particularly.

Luke

011:001 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

011:002 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. **Thy will be done, as in heaven, So, in earth.**

011:003 Give us day by day our daily bread.

011:004 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

This is Jesus teaching that God’s will be done on earth as in heaven. Yes, this applies to individuals. But it is not limited to individuals. It applies to the workings of governments as well.

Most laws are based on some code of morality. If the morality espoused in the Bible cannot be considered, then what code of morality can be considered when passing laws?

But the bottom line is this, the Bible declares that governments should, “Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.”.

Who is the Lord? – Danger of Godless Government

Exodus

005:001 And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

005:002 And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.

In the book of Exodus, around 3500 years ago, the Hebrews were effectively slaves in Egypt. God sent Moses and Aaron to the Egyptian Pharaoh to ask him to release them. At first, Moses and Aaron were to ask that the Hebrews be released to worship in the wilderness for a few days. Then later, they returned to ask that the Hebrews be set free. The above passage is when they asked that Pharaoh to let them go out to worship. This was a clear request from God. It was not a debatable request. But the Pharaoh did not know God. He did not believe in the one true God, and therefore denied the request. It was not until a series of punishments/disasters came to Egypt that the Pharaoh relented.

That is a problem of a godless government (or false god government). They do not know God and will not do His will.

Woe to Them Who Call Good Evil

Isaiah

005:020 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

005:021 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

005:022 Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

005:023 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

005:024 Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, So, their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

005:025 Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

005:026 And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly:

What God Requires

Micah

006:008 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

These things cannot be done/accomplished except a person believe in God and be in a right relationship with Him. Walking with God requires doing what God wills.

Romans

008:001 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

008:002 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

008:003 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

008:004 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

008:005 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

008:006 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

008:007 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

008:008 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

008:009 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if So, be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

My Kingdom Not of This World?

Notice the following verse.

John

018:035 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?

018:036 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

018:037 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

But this does not mean rules and judges should not obey and serve God. It simply means that at this time, God is permitting people to be judges and rulers. When the Millennium comes, Jesus will rule. Notice the following passage regarding the Millennium, especially verse 24. Jesus will take over and rule justly. Today's judges and rulers should follow suit, and do So, as Jesus will, and rule/judge according to God's will.

1 Corinthians

015:020 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

015:021 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

015:022 For as in Adam all die, even So, in Christ shall all be made alive.

015:023 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

015:024 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

015:025 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

015:026 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

015:027 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

015:028 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Cannot Serve 2 Masters

Matthew

006:024 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Acts

005:027 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

005:028 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

005:029 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Jesus spoke the following to the Pharisees, who were leaders in the community. But it also sounds like it applies to government leaders, especially those in democracies. It is said that to be a successful leader in America, you need to figure out what the national trends are and then be a leader for those trends. And this seems to agree with the phrase in verse 15 that, "is highly esteemed among men". The point is, a president or senator or congressman who leads on popular issues is doing an abomination if it is against God's will.

Luke

016:013 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

016:014 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

016:015 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

Summary of What Nations' Relationship To God Should Be

Psalms 67 summarizes the relationship nations should have with God.

Psalms

067:001 God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

067:002 That thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations.

067:003 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

067:004 O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

067:005 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

067:006 Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.

067:007 God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.

So, in this short psalm, God tells us that He judges and governs the nations, He will bless the nations, and the nations should praise and fear Him.

The term 'fear' has several meanings. One is to be afraid of judgment. But another meaning, also true, is that we should love God so much that we are afraid to hurt His feelings, because we want to make Him happy.

This psalm may be a prediction of Jesus' rule at the end of the Great Tribulation period. But it does summarize an ideal relationship between nations and God.

And it does point out that the earth is God's, He rules and causes the earth's increase, and it is our duty to praise and worship Him. Notice verses 5 and 6 which state the people should praise God and THEN the earth will yield its increase.

Warning of Future Judgment

Notice the following verse. It refers to a period called the Great Tribulation.

Micah

005:015 And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

The above is from the King James Version (or translation) of the bible in 1611 because newer translations are copywrited. But newer translations phrase this passage a little differently. Most use phrases like 'upon nations that did not obeyed'. The meaning is clearer and means the same. Remember, heathen nations are those which follow other 'gods' and therefore do not obey or recognize the one true God.

Either way, this is a warning to people that God will pour out His wrath on nations which rejected Him and have not obeyed Him. And it is a warning to all the nations of the world that a future judgment period is coming to all nations.

The book of Zephaniah is another prophecy of 'The Day of the Lord' – also called the Great Tribulation Period. Notice that the reason for this period is mentioned in verse 2 below. Notice what God desires is mentioned in verse 9. This should be a warning to all who believe 'kings and judges' need not serve God.

Zephaniah

003:001 Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!

003:002 She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God.

003:003 Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow.

003:004 Her prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.

003:005 The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.

003:006 I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, So, that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.

003:007 I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; So, their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings.

003:008 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

003:009 For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.

Overview - Danger of Godless Government

Back in the 1500's, there were terrible wars between different religious groups. In the 1600's, many fled to North America So, they could worship as they wanted. That is why the US Constitution guarantees freedom of religion.

But there is a danger of completely removing God from government. The following passage explains.

Romans

008:007 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

And

Proverbs

029:002 When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

Since the bible says rules and judges are to serve God, then should not all rules and judges be Christian? Because if they are not, per the verse above, how can they be subject to God's law?

There are many Bible passages which state and illustrate that God is in control of the world's affairs. When nations reach a certain point of rebellion against God and His laws, they are punished or removed. This is illustrated later.

In fact, the Bible states that God (the Holy Spirit) restrains evil in the world. However, there is to come a period called the Great Tribulation period when God will no longer do this. He will let people do as they please. The Bible states that by the end of this period, about half the people will die. And the Bible states that all would die but Jesus returns to earth and takes control.

Overview - Abominations Leading To Judgment

So what are some of the 'abominations' which lead to judgment? Some are listed below.

Nations Forget (Turn Back On) God

Psalm

009:017 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

Human Sacrifice and Witchcraft

Note that the term 'pass thru the fire' refers to a type of human sacrifice.

Deuteronomy

018:009 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

018:010 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch.

018:011 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

018:012 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

018:013 Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God.

018:014 For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee So, to do.

False gods

Deuteronomy

032:016 They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger.

032:017 They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

032:018 Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.

032:019 And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.

032:020 And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.

032:021 They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

032:022 For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

032:023 I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

032:024 They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.

032:025 The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs

But is it not simply having idols that will bring judgment. Being hypocritical in religion also brings condemnation. By 'hypocritical' I mean following religious rituals with having a heart far from God, following religious rituals while leading an evil life.

The book of Isaiah provides insight into this - on how God judges nations. At the beginning of Isaiah, God calls the heavens and earth to be witnesses. God states that His people (Judah) has forgotten Him and is corrupt with sin. God states even the dumb ox knows who feeds it but Judah has forgotten God who blessed them. God's main charge is that their hearts were far from Him. They continued religious practices but their hearts were far from God as is evidenced by how they lived their lives. The following is the passage.

Isaiah

001:002 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

001:003 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

001:004 Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

001:005 Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

001:006 From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

001:007 Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

001:008 And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.

001:009 Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.

The book of Isaiah continues with God stating He does not like religious practices when people live evil lives.

Isaiah

001:010 Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

001:011 To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

001:012 When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

001:013 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

001:014 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.

001:015 And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

001:016 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;
001:017 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.
001:018 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.
001:019 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:
001:020 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

Notice in the above passage, God said if Israel returned to Him, they would “eat the good of the land” (verse 19). But if they continued to rebel, they would be “devoured with the sword” (verse 20).

The book of Isaiah continues with some of the evil that was in Judah.

Isaiah

001:021 How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.
001:022 Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:
001:023 Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

Notice verse 23 above refers to bribes.

Sexual Immorality

Leviticus

018:006 None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the LORD.
018:007 The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she is thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.
018:008 The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness.
018:009 The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.
018:010 The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover: for theirs is thine own nakedness.
018:011 The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, she is thy sister, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.
018:012 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister: she is thy father's near kinswoman.
018:013 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister: for she is thy mother's near kinswoman.
018:014 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: she is thine aunt.
018:015 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter in law: she is thy son's wife; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.
018:016 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it is thy brother's nakedness.
018:017 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; for they are her near kinswomen: it is wickedness.

018:018 Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time.

018:019 Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness.

018:020 Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her.

018:021 And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

018:022 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

018:023 Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.

Verse 22 refers to homosexuality.

Leviticus

018:024 Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you:

018:025 And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.

018:026 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you:

018:027 (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;)

018:028 That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.

The chapter finishes

Leviticus

018:029 For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people.

018:030 Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God.

Jude

001:007 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Pride

Zephaniah 2:8-10

002:008 I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their border.

002:009 Therefore as I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.

002:010 This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the LORD of hosts.

Jeremiah

009:023 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

009:024 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Dress Code

Deuteronomy

022:005 The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do So, are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

In short, it is sinful to be a transvestite/transgender.

Some tried interpreting this to mean men should not wear kilts and women should not wear slacks. I believe that is an unreasonable interpretation. I believe this passage simply means that men should look like men and women should look like women. It is not right for a man to dress or appear as a woman and vice versa.

Other

Proverbs

006:016 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:

006:017 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

006:018 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

006:019 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Judgment Examples – Overview

The Bible contains many examples of God judging nations. And it gives the reasons for the judgment. There is one central theme to the judgment – in each case, the judged nation fell away from God (no longer believed in Him). In many cases, they worshiped idols. In many cases, they went into gross immorality, or what the Bible calls, abominations. When the Jewish nation repented and returned to God, He forgave them and restored them. However, He did not always restore the country to its prior greatness.

People can believe what they want. These notes just present samples of what is in the Bible. This is not a comprehensive list of every example. It is just a sample of them.

Why are these stories in the bible? They are example for use to learn from, So, we do not make the same mistakes. Notice the following bible passage which says just that. It was written to the Corinthians, who were Gentiles, not Jews. This demonstrates that these examples are for all people, not just the Jewish nation.

1 Corinthians

- 010:001 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;
- 010:002 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;
- 010:003 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;
- 010:004 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.
- 010:005 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.
- 010:006 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.
- 010:007 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.
- 010:008 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.
- 010:009 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.
- 010:010 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.
- 010:011 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Another interesting passage is in Jeremiah 18. It is important to remember that when Moses lead Israel into Canann, the land was described a land of milk and honey.

Numbers

- 013:027 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

But over time, the nation turned its back on God and He cursed the land, where today it is still an example to us.

Jeremiah

- 018:013 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing.
- 018:014 Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?

018:015 Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up;

018:016 To make their land desolate, and a perpetual hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head.

Jeremiah

029:017 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are So, evil.

029:018 And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them:

029:019 Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD.

029:020 Hear ye therefore the word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon:

029:021 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and of Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name; Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall slay them before your eyes;

029:022 And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire;

So too should the scattering of Israel be a caution, an example to us today.

And it is not just the stories of Israel which are examples for us. There are stories of Gentile nations which are in the bible for examples to us, as expressed in the following passage.

2 Peter

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

Of course, there are more stories than just those regarding Israel, Sodom and Gomorrha, and the flood. The following pages include stories of other cities and nations which were judged by God and are examples to us.

Judgment Example - God's Judgment of the World – The Great Flood circa 2448 BC

The Bible story of the Great Flood is an example how God judges the earth. In the following passages, it records that the good, godly men married ungodly, evil people. And all became corrupt and evil except Noah. So, when Noah was 500 years old, God told him to build an arc because He was going to destroy the evil people with a flood. For 100 years, Noah and his family constructed the arc. And for 100 years, the people of the earth did not believe Noah and continued in their ways until the flood began. But by that time, it was too late. Noah and his family were in the arc and the other people died in the flood. And this occurred because they were evil, rejected God, and did not believe Noah's message.

The main points to this story is

1. God judges the world
2. God gave people a long time (here, 100 years) for warning and time to repent
3. Verse 3 summarizes it well when it states "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man". Eventually, there is a time for judgment.

Genesis

005:032 And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

006:001 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

006:002 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

006:003 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

006:004 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

006:005 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

006:006 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

006:007 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

006:008 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

006:009 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

006:010 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

006:011 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

006:012 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

006:013 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

006:014 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

Genesis

007:011 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

007:012 And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

007:013 In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark;

Genesis

007:021 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man:

007:022 All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.

007:023 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

Judgment Example – Sodom and Gomorrah circa 1918 – 1898 BC

Another example of God's judgment on nations is the destruction of the city-states of Sodom and Gomorrah. There are 2 important stories here. One is how God judged those 2 cities. The other is how living in a morally decadent society corrupted Lot's morals and destroyed his family. The Biblical story starts with Abram and his nephew Lot deciding where to live. Notice that Abram is very generous to Lot in allowing Lot to decide where to live. Lot chose to live in an area where the people were very evil because it had much water. Lot chose for economic reasons.

Genesis

013:008 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.

013:009 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

013:010 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

013:011 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

013:012 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

013:013 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

About 20 years later (according to one theologian), God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sinful ways. However, before this happened, God warned Lot to flee with his family from the city.

Genesis

019:024 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

Genesis

019:027 And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD:

019:028 And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

019:029 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.

019:030 And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

Notice in verse 30 that Lot lived in a cave after he fled the land. I wonder how this affected his economy. He chose to live in Sodom for economic reasons. Now it seems he lived more poorly. I think one of the morals is, don't live in Sodom. And if you do live in Sodom, move out before it affects your family and finances. What do I mean? There are unsafe places for Christians to live in this world.

But what was the great sin of these cities? That was actually revealed to the prophet Ezekiel some 1300 years later.

Ezekiel

016:049 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

016:050 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.

Another bible passage alludes to why they were destroyed.

Jude

001:007 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Some newer translations use the terms sexual immorality and perversion.

The section called “Issues – Schools” give a more complete account of the destruction of these cities and the lessons of living in a decadent society.

Judgment Example – Conquest of Palestine circa 1451 – 1427 BC

Defeat At Ali

The book of Joshua in the Bible records the conquest of Palestine after the Israelis left Egypt. And there are lessons which can be learned from these events.

Chapter 6 record the destruction of the city of Jericho. The inhabitants knew for many years that the Israelis were coming and that they worshiped the true God. But only one household turned in faith to Him and was saved in Jericho. One of the commandments that God gave to the Israelis when taking Jericho was

Joshua

006:018 And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.

006:019 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.

But that commandment was not followed.

Joshua

007:001 But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel.

The Israelis then lost the battle at the next city. Here is an example where God did not give Israel victory because of their sin.

Joshua

007:010 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?

007:011 Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff.

007:012 Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you.

007:013 Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.

God with Israel

So long as Israel was true to God, God gave them victory. The destruction is huge. The conquered peoples knew they were coming and now they followed the one true God as recorded below.

Joshua

002:009 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

002:010 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

002:011 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

But the inhabitants did not turn to the one true God. And Israel conquered the land. The following passage is one example.

Josh

010:040 So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel commanded.

010:041 And Joshua smote them from Kadeshbarnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon.

010:042 And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.

The severity shows how awful it is to rebel against God. It also is a foreshadowing of what will come in the end time.

Future Warning

At the end of Joshua's life, he gave the following warning to Israel.

Joshua

023:009 For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.

023:010 One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.

023:011 Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.

023:012 Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you:

023:013 Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.

Josh

024:020 If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

Judgment Example – Period of Judges Circa 1425 BC - 1095

During this period, the nation of Israel was governed by a series of 'judges' selected by God. The history is recorded in the book of Judges in the Bible. There is a common thread in the book. The people of Israel did what was right in their own eyes (in other words, they did whatever they wanted, such as worship idols, etc). Then God would punish the nation. God chose a judge. The people repented and their punishment was removed. The judge died, and the people returned to their evil ways. And the story repeats.

The last verse of Judges summarizes the period. Notice in Judges the history of Israel during that period.

Judges

021:025 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

That was the problem – people did what was right in their own eyes. That phrase of condemnation is repeated twice more in Judges. Notice in the following passage what 'was right in his own eyes'.

Judges

017:004 Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image: and they were in the house of Micah.

017:005 And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.

017:006 In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

It is worth while reading the entire book of Judges in the Bible because there are more examples than can reasonably be listed here. The following are just a few examples.

Judges

001:027 Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Bethshean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

001:028 And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.

001:029 Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.

001:030 Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries.

001:031 Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob:

001:032 But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out.

001:033 Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Bethshemesh, nor the inhabitants of Bethanath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Bethshemesh and of Bethanath became tributaries unto them.

001:034 And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain: for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley:

001:035 But the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, So, that they became tributaries.

001:036 And the coast of the Amorites was from the going up to Akrabbim, from the rock, and upward.

Judges

002:001 And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.

002:002 And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?

002:003 Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.

Judges

002:010 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

002:011 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

002:012 And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

002:013 And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

002:014 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, So, that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

002:015 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

002:016 Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

002:017 And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so.

002:018 And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

002:019 And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

002:020 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice;

002:021 I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died:

002:022 That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not.

002:023 Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.

Judges

003:005 And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites:

003:006 And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.

003:007 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves.

003:008 Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushanrishathaim eight years.

Judges

004:001 And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead.

004:002 And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles.

004:003 And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.

Notice the following verses mention that it was So, lawless during one period it was dangerous to walk the highways.

Judges

005:006 In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through byways.

005:007 The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.

Judges

006:001 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years.

Judges

008:022 Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.

008:023 And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.

How sad the story of Jair in the following passage. Nothing is recorded of what Jair did for him. Only that Jair accumulated wealth without anything significant being done for God or country.

Judges

010:003 And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years.

010:004 And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havothjair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead.

010:005 And Jair died, and was buried in Camon.

The following is another example of when the nation of Israel fell back into idolity.

Judges

010:006 And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him.

010:007 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon.

What is sad is how little some judges did in their time. Chosen of God to be a judge yet nothing is recorded of what they did for him.

Judges

012:008 And after him Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel.

012:009 And he had thirty sons, and thirty daughters, whom he sent abroad, and took in thirty daughters from abroad for his sons. And he judged Israel seven years.

012:010 Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Bethlehem.

012:011 And after him Elon, a Zebulonite, judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years.

012:012 And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon in the country of Zebulun.

012:013 And after him Abdon the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel.

012:014 And he had forty sons and thirty nephews, that rode on threescore and ten ass colts: and he judged Israel eight years.

Judgment Example – Fall of King Saul circa 1056

The Bible contains several stories about the evil of King Saul. He eventually died in battle. Notice the reason why he died – why God punished him. The term ‘one that had a familiar spirit’ refers to a fortune teller or witch. People today do not see this as being serious. But this was consulting with an evil spirit.

1 Chronicles

010:013 So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;

010:014 And enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

Also notice that God said He slew Saul. This illustrates again that God is in control although it might look otherwise.

King Saul should have known not to do this because it was forbidden in their scriptures.

Leviticus

019:031 Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus

020:006 And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.

Leviticus

020:027 A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.

Judgment Example - Ruler's Sin Causes Punishment to Country Circa 1017 BC

What is interesting about the following story is that Israel was punished for King David's sin. Interesting how a ruler's sin can affect the whole country. Second, one of the alternative punishments was that other nations would war against Israel. This implies God controls actions of nations.

There is an interesting story in 2 Samuel chapter 24 illustrating that God may punish an entire country for the sin of its leaders. The story starts with King David asking for a census of Israel.

2 Samuel

024:001 And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.

Notice that the verse first says God was angry with Israel. Then 'he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah'. 1 Chronicles also contains a record of it

1 Chronicles

021:001 And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

So it sounds like God was angry with Israel and allowed Satan to provoke David to number Israel. The reason that this was sinful is not explicitly stated. But the following was the result.

2 Samuel

024:010 And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

024:011 For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

024:012 Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.

024:013 So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.

024:014 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.

024:015 So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.

024:016 And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite.

The story is repeated again in First Chronicles

1 Chronicles

021:008 And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

021:009 And the LORD spake unto Gad, David's seer, saying,

021:010 Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things: choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.

021:011 So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Choose thee

021:012 Either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee; or else three days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.

021:013 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man.

The text ends with David repenting and offering a sacrifice per the instruction of the prophet from God.

Judgment Example – Israel Split in 2 Due To King’s Idolatry Circa 992 – 975 BC

After the Israelis left Egypt and entered Palestine, they failed to take all of the land God promised to them. And they disobeyed God by making treaties with some of the peoples who lived in the land. At first, the nation of Israel was a single nation and it was a theocracy. It was governed by judges who were selected by God. During this time (recorded in the book of Judges), the people lived as they wanted, often falling away from God and into sin. God then punished them by letting countries attack them. They repented and God raised up a judge to free them.

Later, the Israelis demanded a king. God allowed this and the kingdom was united. One of the kings, King Solomon, departed from God and as punishment, God split the kingdom in two. This occurred during Solomon’s son’s reign and most of the kingdom was torn from him.

(Note: The northern kingdom was called Israel and the southern kingdom was called Judah. Over time, both kingdoms fell into idolatry and became very evil. Eventually, both were conquered and scattered – sometimes several times.)

1 Kings

011:001 But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites:

011:002 Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love.

011:003 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.

011:004 For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.

011:005 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

011:006 And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father.

011:007 Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.

011:008 And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

011:009 And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice,

011:010 And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded.

011:011 Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

011:012 Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.

011:013 Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

1 Kings

011:043 And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

012:001 And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

1 Kings

012:003 That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying,

012:004 Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.

012:005 And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed.

012:006 And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

012:007 And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

012:008 But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him:

012:009 And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?

012:010 And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins.

012:011 And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

012:012 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day.

012:013 And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;

012:014 And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

012:015 Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

012:016 So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So, Israel departed unto their tents.

012:017 But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

012:018 Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

012:019 So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

Notice that God declared the split was from Him.

1 Kings

012:020 And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

012:021 And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

012:022 But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying,

012:023 Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

012:024 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me.

Judgment Example – Assyrian Captivity of Israel circa 925

The following Bible passage summarizes the fall of the 10 northern tribes of Israel. Notice the reason why they fell was because they worshiped false gods. Passing thru the fire means children were burnt in alters to pagan gods.

2 Kings

017:008 And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

017:009 And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

017:010 And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree:

017:011 And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger:

017:012 For they served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.

017:013 Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

017:014 Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God.

017:015 And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them.

017:016 And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

017:017 And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

017:018 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.

017:019 Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

017:020 And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.

017:021 For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin.

017:022 For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them;

017:023 Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So, was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day.

017:024 And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.

Judgment Example – Draught in King Ahab's Time circa 910 BC

King Ahab was very evil. God, thru his prophet, declared that there would be no rain as punishment.

1 Kings

017:001 And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

Notice that this prophecy did come to pass. The following verse states the length of the draught when Elijah was instructed by God to see the evil king Ahab

1 Kings

018:001 And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.

But when they meet, notice how evil king Ahab blames Elijah for the draught rather than to accept the responsibility themselves. This is just another example how people believe they can have freedom of religion (ie, have any god they want) and live any way they want without the true God punishing them.

1 Kings

018:017 And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

018:018 And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.

So when exactly did the draught end? Verses 21-38 describe a demonstration that Baalim was a false god and God was the true God. Verses 39-45 describe how Israel turned to God and the rain returned. Notice it was after Israel returned to God.

1 Kings

018:039 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

018:040 And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

018:041 And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

018:042 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,

018:043 And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.

018:044 And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down that the rain stop thee not.

018:045 And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel.

Judgment Example – War with Syria in King Ahab's Time circa 906 BC

Next is an example how God allowed Syria to attack Israel. God allowed Israel to win the first battle but warned them, thru a prophet, to turn to Him because Syria would attack again and would win if Israel failed to turn to Him.

1 Kings

020:001 And Benhadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and there were thirty and two kings with him, and horses, and chariots; and he went up and besieged Samaria, and warred against it.

1 Kings

020:013 And, behold, there came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.

1 Kings

020:021 And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.

020:022 And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.

020:023 And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, Their gods are gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.

1 Kings

020:026 And it came to pass at the return of the year, that Benhadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight against Israel.

020:027 And the children of Israel were numbered, and were all present, and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.

020:028 And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, Because the Syrians have said, The LORD is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

020:029 And they pitched one over against the other seven days. And So, it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined: and the children of Israel slew of the Syrians an hundred thousand footmen in one day.

Judgment Example – Israel Turning Its Back on God circa 780 BC

Hosea was a prophet during a time when the country of Israel had turned its back to God and went after other gods. In the book of Hosea, God likens His relationship to Israel to that between a husband and an unfaithful wife. God blessed Israel out of love and the people acted like prostitutes by worshiping other gods. God wanted to give Israel an object lesson. So, He told the prophet Hosea to marry a woman who was a prostitute. He likened their relationship as His relationship to Israel.

In the following verses, God declares that the prosperity that Israel had was a gift from God. And God declares that the loss of that prosperity was the result of their unfaithfulness to Him.

Hosea

002:008 For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.

002:009 Therefore will I return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness.

002:010 And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand.

002:011 I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.

002:012 And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, whereof she hath said, These are my rewards that my lovers have given me: and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them.

002:013 And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD.

But notice what the Bible says about those who follow righteousness. NOTE: The NIV translation of verse 17 starts, “The fruit of righteousness”.

Isaiah

032:017 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

032:018 And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

Another criticism of God is in the verse below. The problem was His people had no knowledge. They may have had religious observances or habits but they really had no knowledge or understanding of Him. This led to sin..

Hosea

004:001 Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.

And again God warns his people that Israel and the animals in it will suffer for the peoples' sins.

Hosea

004:002 By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.

004:003 Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.

Once again, what caused this situation? They forgot God's law and they lacked knowledge of God.

Hosea

004:006 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

In Hosea's time, Israel tried getting help from Egypt and then Israel rather than turn to God and seek His help. This is what God said of that. Note: Ephraim is a name used for Israel.

Hosea

007:010 And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face: and they do not return to the LORD their God, nor seek him for all this.

007:011 Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.

So what happens? Earlier in the chapter, Israel is accused of open sin and having turned from God. The following is the result.

Hosea

007:012 When they shall go, I will spread my net upon them; I will bring them down as the fowls of the heaven; I will chastise them, as their congregation hath heard.

007:013 Woe unto them! for they have fled from me: destruction unto them! because they have transgressed against me: though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against me.

An interesting prophecy or judgement.

Hosea

009:017 My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations.

Judgment Example – Pride Circa 765

Jeremiah

009:023 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

009:024 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Uzziah was a good king of Judah. His reign is covered earlier in the book of 2 Chronicles. But his pride brought his downfall.

2 Chronicles

026:016 But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

026:017 And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men:

026:018 And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God.

026:019 Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar.

026:020 And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the LORD had smitten him.

026:021 And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

So what was the impact of this on the country? Notice the next passage. His son Jotham became king. He was a good king but stayed away from the temple, probably because of what happened to his father. By his staying away from the temple, the people became more corrupt. Sort of a domino effect.

2 Chronicles

027:001 Jotham was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok.

027:002 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah did: howbeit he entered not into the temple of the LORD. And the people did yet corruptly.

The next domino may have been the effect on Jotham's son. Was Ahaz's fall into idolatry in part the result of his father, Jotham's, refusal to go to the temple? Also, notice the reason why God punished Judah under Ahaz's rule. Reasons included idolatry and human sacrifice.

2 Chronicles

028:001 Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father:□

028:002 For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim.

028:003 Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

028:004 He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

028:005 Wherefore the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.

028:006 For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers.

Judgment Example – Moab Circa 726

Isaiah predicts the judgment of the nation of Moab. Moab was the son of Lot and Lot's oldest daughter (see the section on Issues – Schools). Moab's offspring were the nation of Moab. The nation of Moab hired Balam to curse Israel. And Ruth, who is in the line leading to Jesus, was a Moabite. The following verses tell of the sin and judgment of the nation of Moab.

Isaiah

016:006 We have heard of the pride of Moab; he is very proud: even of his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath:
but his lies shall not be so.

016:007 Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations of Kirhareseth shall ye mourn;
surely they are stricken.

Isaiah

016:013 This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning Moab since that time.

016:014 But now the LORD hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab
shall be contemned, with all that great multitude; and the remnant shall be very small and feeble.

Judgment Example - Assyria circa 713 BC

The story of Assyria has good lessons. Assyria at one time was a major world power. And it was a very evil nation. Yet, God used this nation for His purposes as is recorded in Isaiah.

The following passages in Isaiah chapter 10 are some of the most revealing in the Bible how God punishes nations. Here, God declares He is using the nation of Assyria to punish Israel for their sin. Then after He uses Assyria to do this, He will punish Assyria for their sins. Notice that God compares Assyria to a rod which God wheels. Also note that the Assyrians were no better than Israel. Yet God used them to punish Israel.

Isaiah

010:005 O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

010:006 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

Yet God would not tolerate an evil nation forever. And He sent the prophet Jonah to the capital city of Nineveh to warn them the city would be destroyed in 40 days if they did not repent and turn to God. And they did as recorded in the book of Jonah.

Jonah

003:001 And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

003:002 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

003:003 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.

003:004 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

003:005 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

But this turning to God did not last. In a hundred years or so, the Assyrians would go back to their evil ways. God warned them thru his prophet Naham that they would be judged and destroyed.

Naham

001:001 The burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

001:002 God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.

001:003 The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked:

So why did God destroy them? Reasons are given both in Isaiah and in Naham.

Isaiah

010:012 Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

010:013 For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man:

010:014 And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.

010:015 Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood.

010:016 Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.

Naham chapter 1 verse 3 said it was because of their wickedness. Chapter 3 verses 1 thru 4 list details.

Naham

003:001 Woe to the bloody city! it is all full of lies and robbery; the prey departeth not;

003:002 The noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the prancing horses, and of the jumping chariots.

003:003 The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear: and there is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcases; and there is none end of their corpses; they stumble upon their corpses:

003:004 Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.

Chapter 3 verses 18 and 19 summarizes their destruction and their sin.

Naham

003:018 Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall dwell in the dust: thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them.

003:019 There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?

Why is this an important lesson? How does it apply today?

Assyria was an evil nation that was saved by turning to God. And then God destroyed them when they rejected Him and went back to their evil ways. Sound like any modern day countries?

Judgment Example – Babylon Circa 713 & 600 BC

The Prophecy circa 713

The following verses circa 713 predict the coming of the Babylonians to conquer Judah. It is interesting that this story is similar to that of the Assyrians. In both cases, an evil country is used to punish Israel and then it in turn is punished by God. Note chapter 13 verse 20 and how it has been fulfilled.

At the time of this prophecy, the city of Babylon was just that – a city. It was not yet an empire. Yet this prophecy looks into the future when it is an empire. The passages give a prophecy of the city Babylon and later the term ‘babylon’ refers to the united rebellion of the world against God.

In the following passages, the word ‘burden’ means ‘judgment’.

Isaiah

013:001 The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

013:002 Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.

013:003 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness.

013:004 The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the LORD of hosts mustereth the host of the battle.

013:005 They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

Verses 6-16 refer to the great tribulation period which is yet to come. Verses 17-22 continue the prophecy of the Babylonians. Notice that after God uses the Babylonian to punish Judah, God then judges Babylon.

Isaiah

013:017 Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it.

013:018 Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eyes shall not spare children.

013:019 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

013:020 It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

013:021 But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

013:022 And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

Note the prophecy in verse 20 above.

The Fulfillment circa 600 BC

Notice the following. Manasseh was a very evil king in Judah that ruled years before. In verse 4, the Lord did not pardon because they had not repented. (Bible says all sins are forgiven if people repent.)

2 Kings

024:001 In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him.

024:002 And the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants the prophets.

024:003 Surely at the commandment of the LORD came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did;

024:004 And also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the LORD would not pardon.

The story continues with his son. This is the first deportation to Babylon.

2 Kings

024:006 So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

024:007 And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

024:008 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.

024:009 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.

024:010 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged.

024:011 And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it.

024:012 And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign.

024:013 And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.

024:014 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.

024:015 And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.

024:016 And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

Another story of rebellion

2 Kings

024:018 Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.
And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

024:019 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

024:020 For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

The following is the final deportation to Babylon

2 Kings

025:001 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.

025:002 And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

025:003 And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land.

025:004 And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about:) and the king went the way toward the plain.

025:005 And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him.

025:006 So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him.

025:007 And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

025:008 And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

025:009 And he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire.

025:010 And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

025:011 Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away.

Judgment Example - Prophecy of Judgment On Israel For Rejecting Jesus Circa 712

Isaiah

050:002 Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst.

God warns nations not to hurt the nation of Israel. Gods judges all.

What is interesting about this verse is that Israel is no longer 'a country flowing with milk and honey' as it was described when they first entered the land.

Judgment Example - God Saves Judah – King Hezekiah’s Prayer Circa 710

Hezekiah was a good king of Judah. During his reign, Assyria attacked Judah. When the Assyrian army came to Jerusalem, Hezekiah realized he could not defeat army. He sent ambassadors to the Assyrian commander but the commander demanded their surrender and ridiculed their trust in God. So, Hezekiah prayed to God and God delivered them. The following are selected passages summarizing the events.

Isaiah

036:001 Now it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them.

Isaiah

037:005 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

037:006 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

037:007 Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

In the following passage, the letter is from the Assyrian commander. Notice in the following passage, notice the reason why Hezekiah asks for deliverance. This is important.

Isaiah

037:014 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

037:015 And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD, saying,

037:016 O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.

037:017 Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God.

037:018 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries,

037:019 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

037:020 Now therefore, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD, even thou only.

The following is the reply from God thru His prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah

037:021 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria:

037:022 This is the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

037:023 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel.

And it continues...

Isaiah

037:029 Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

Isaiah

037:033 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it.

037:034 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

037:035 For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

Notice one reason why God punished Assyria is because they blasphemed God. (The blasphemy is in verses not included here.)

The final judgment follows.

Isaiah

037:036 Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

037:037 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

037:038 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia: and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

The story is repeated in the second book of Kings in the Bible...

2 Kings

018:011 And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes:

018:012 Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them.

2 Kings

018:017 And the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field.

018:018 And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.

018:019 And Rabshakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest?

018:020 Thou sayest, (but they are but vain words,) I have counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?

The story continues...

2 Kings

019:001 And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

The story continues...

2 Kings

019:005 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

019:006 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

019:007 Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

The story continues

2 Kings

019:014 And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

019:015 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

019:016 LORD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.

019:017 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands,

019:018 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

019:019 Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.

019:020 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard.

The story continues... part of the message from God...

2 Kings

019:028 Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

019:029 And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.

019:030 And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.

019:031 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.

019:032 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it.

019:033 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

019:034 For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

The story finishes...

2 Kings

019:035 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

019:036 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

019:037 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

Psalms

118:006 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

118:007 The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.

118:008 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.

118:009 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.

And again

Psalms

118:010 All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.

118:011 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

118:012 They compassed me about like bees: they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

Downfall Because Of Pride - Danger of Alleged Friends

There is a second lesson which can be learned from the reign of king Hezekiah. King Hezekiah was one of the best kings of Judah. However, his sin eventually led to a downfall of his kingdom after his death. The problem did not occur when other countries threatened him. The problem occurred when one kingdom flattered him.

In the following story, the Bible records how King Hezekiah received a letter from King Sennacherib of Assyria which demanded his surrender. King Hezekiah prayed and God delivered him.

Notice that some time later, King Hezekiah became very ill and was told he would die. He prayed and God said he would allow the king to live longer. Ambassadors from Babylon came to wish him well and Hezekiah proudly showed them all the wealth of his kingdom.

2 Chronicles

032:017 He wrote also letters to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, As the gods of the nations of other lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, So, shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand.

032:018 Then they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that were on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city.

032:019 And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, which were the work of the hands of man.

032:020 And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.

032:021 And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So, he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword.

032:022 Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side.

032:023 And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: So, that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.

032:024 In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign.

032:025 But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.

032:026 Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, So, that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

032:027 And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels;

032:028 Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks.

032:029 Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for God had given him substance very much.

032:030 This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.

032:031 Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.

The book of Kings gives more details

2 Kings

020:012 At that time Berodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.

020:013 And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.

020:014 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon.

020:015 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

020:016 And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD.

020:017 Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.

020:018 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

020:019 Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?

Notice that Hezekiah's pride proved to be the downfall. He did not ask God how to receive the Ambassadors from Babylon because they can as 'friends'. It is possible that the kingdom would be attacked and defeated by Babylon for other sins. However, revealing the treasure to the Babylonians probably was encouragement for them to attack. And if the Babylonians had conquered them without knowing about the treasury, perhaps they would never have learned of it or taken it.

This is another example of how a leader's sin (in this case, pride) lead to a punishment for the entire nation.

What is also striking is King Hezekiah's response recorded in verse 19 of 2 Kings, chapter 20.

Judgment Example – Israel for Pride Circa 710 BC & 612 BC

The prophecy of Micah gives reasons for God's judgement of Israel. Part of it is below. At that time, the people were scheming against each other. Judges expected bribes. And the rulers and the rich schemed to get more.

Micah

007:002 The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net.

007:003 That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: So, they wrap it up.

God, thru the prophet Jeremiah, declared judgment on the nation of Judah. In the prophecy, God lists reasons why a northern nation (ie, Babylon) would be allowed to conquer Judah. One of these reasons was the corrupt courts in Judah.

Jeremiah

005:026 For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men.

005:027 As a cage is full of birds, So, are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.

005:028 They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.

005:029 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

Judgment Example - Zephaniah's Prophecy of Judgment Circa 630

Zephaniah

001:004 I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests;

001:005 And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham;

001:006 And them that are turned back from the LORD; and those that have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him.

The following is another example of the Bible declaring God's judgment – or punishment – on a nation for its sin. In the following passages, God declares judgment to a nation who would not “draw near to her God”. It states that God tried to correct it – meaning lesser punishment or correction. But the nation did not turn to God as a result. Therefore God would “pour out my wrath on them”.

Zephaniah

003:001 Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!

003:002 She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God

And continuing the thought...

Zephaniah

003:007 I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; So, their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings.

003:008 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

Judgment Example – Revival circa 624

Background

God told the Israelis not to make covenants (or treaties) with the peoples of Palistine.

Deuteronomy

007:001 When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

007:002 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

The following passage states why. Note that these people knew for many years the Israelis followed the one true God but they did not turn to Him.

Deuteronomy

007:003 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

007:004 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: So, will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly

The following passage states what the Israelis were to do

Deuteronomy

007:005 But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.

The following passage gives a reason why

007:006 For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

The following passage indicates why God chose the Israelis

Deuteronomy

007:007 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:

007:008 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

God declares a blessing for obedience and a curse for disobedience.

Deuteronomy

011:026 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse;

011:027 A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day:

011:028 And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known

God repeats His instructions to the nation of Israel.

Deuteronomy

012:002 Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree:

012:003 And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place.

The Revival

After a period of disobedience and punishment, the nation returns to God during a period of revival.

2 Kings

023:001 And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.

023:002 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD.

023:003 And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant.

023:004 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Bethel.

023:005 And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven.

023:006 And he brought out the grove from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people.

023:007 And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were by the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the grove.

023:008 And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba, and brake down the high places of the gates that were in the

entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on a man's left hand at the gate of the city.

023:009 Nevertheless the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.

023:010 And he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech.

023:011 And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathanmelech the chamberlain, which was in the suburbs, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire.

023:012 And the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king beat down, and brake them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.

023:013 And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile.

023:014 And he brake in pieces the images, and cut down the groves, and filled their places with the bones of men.

023:015 Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove.

023:016 And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

023:017 Then he said, What title is that that I see? And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel.

023:018 And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So, they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.

023:019 And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Bethel.

023:020 And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.

023:021 And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant.

A Lesson

God does not ask or want people to attack unbelievers or places of heathen worship today. In fact, God says not to. He had a special purpose for the Israelis.

However, there is a lesson that can be learned. When the Israelis made intermingled and married the pagan people around them, they were tempted by them to return to idolatry and they did fall back into idolatry. God punished them for it. But there was revival in Israel where they turned back to the one true God.

The point is, today we have similar situations. Children of Christian parents are being sent to public schools, watching TV shows and movies written and produced by non-Christians, etc. Not all are bad. But there are those which are clearly which have an anti-Christian message. And there is a falling away from the faith, acceptance of what is condemned in the Bible. In the New Testament, we are taught tolerance. But we need to take care not to compromise principles or worse.

Judgment Example – Idolatry - Draught circa 612-608 BC

God sometimes withholds good weather as punishment to a nation. The first several verses discuss the sin. Later, God declares the punishment.

Jeremiah

001:014 Then the LORD said unto me, Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

001:015 For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah.

001:016 And I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.

Jeremiah

002:007 And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination.

Jeremiah

002:013 For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

Jeremiah

002:019 Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

Jeremiah

003:001 They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD.

003:002 Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness.

003:003 Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.

It is important to point out that in the above passage, God declares that He controls the weather and He decided to punish them by withholding rain. This is an act of God's will and power, not a random act of nature.

Jeremiah 3:6 thru Jeremiah 6:30 is a prophecy against Judah for the sins of that nation. In these passages, God states He had punished the nation of Israel (to the north) for their sins and yet the people of Judah continued in those same sins.

So, therefore, God would judge Judah as well. In these passages, God lists their sins, calls for their repentance, and states the judgment to follow if Judah would not turn from those sins.

In the following verse, God states the nation of Judah was like a harlot. This was because the people worshiped other gods. The people of Judah apparently observed religious rituals but their heart was not for God. Also notice that God states Judah defiled the land because they worshiped false gods.

Jeremiah

003:008 And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

003:009 And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks.

003:010 And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD.

The following is one of many stating that God will accept Israel back if they return to him.

Jeremiah

003:012 Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever.

003:013 Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.

003:014 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:

003:015 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Jeremiah continues the prophecy with the following warning from God that their country will be destroyed. The power from the north is Babylon.

Jeremiah

004:006 Set up the standard toward Zion: retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction.

004:007 The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; and thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant.

004:008 For this gird you with sackcloth, lament and howl: for the fierce anger of the LORD is not turned back from us.

The following passage gives insight into how widespread the corruption of Judah was.

Jeremiah

005:001 Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.

Notice the following passage contains two reasons why God judged Judah.

Jeremiah

005:007 How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses.

005:008 They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.

005:009 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

The phrase, 'neighed after his neighbor's wife' is a poetic way of saying that people coveted their neighbors's wives and tried (and may have succeeded in) to seduce them.

The following passage gives another reason why God judged Judah.

Jeremiah

005:019 And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, Wherefore doeth the LORD our God all these things unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, So, shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not your's.

Jeremiah

005:023 But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone.

005:024 Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

005:025 Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.

Jeremiah

007:017 Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

007:018 The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.

007:019 Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?

007:020 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

The following passage states God withheld the rain as one of punishments for their sins

Jeremiah

005:023 But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone.

005:024 Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

005:025 Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.

The following passage gives another reason why God judged Judah

Jeremiah

005:026 For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men.

005:027 As a cage is full of birds, So, are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.

005:028 They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.

005:029 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

So what was the 'right of the needy'? The law forbade farmers from gleaning their fields. More specifically, farmers could harvest their crops. But if grain fell on the fields, they were not allowed to pick it up (glean). Instead, the poor were allowed to do this. Perhaps farmers were not allowing the poor to glean the fields?

The following passage gives another reason why God judged Judah.

Jeremiah

006:013 For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

The following repeats the prophecy of a northern nation which will destroy Judah.

Jeremiah

006:022 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, a people cometh from the north country, and a great nation shall be raised from the sides of the earth.

006:023 They shall lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea; and they ride upon horses, set in array as men for war against thee, O daughter of Zion.

The message in Jeremiah 7-9 was given after the books of the law was found in the Temple.

Notice some of the sins listed in verse 9 below. And notice the judgment God declares in verse 15. This passage tells us the people of Judah trusted that would be safe because of God's temple. And they lived as they pleased. But God punished them for their sins.

Jeremiah

007:009 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;

007:010 And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?

007:011 Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD.

007:012 But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.

007:013 And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not;

007:014 Therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh.

007:015 And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim.

Notice that God condemns lying and deceit.

Jeremiah

009:003 And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD.

009:004 Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders.

009:005 And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity.

009:006 Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD.

009:007 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

009:008 Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait.

009:009 Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

Notice also in verse 7, Jeremiah says, "our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee". Jeremiah did not say "their" or "they" because he was part of the nation.

Jeremiah

014:001 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah concerning the dearth.

014:002 Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish; they are black unto the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up.

014:003 And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, and found no water; they returned with their vessels empty; they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads.

014:004 Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads.

014:005 Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook it, because there was no grass.

014:006 And the wild asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because there was no grass.

014:007 O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.

Here is another interesting Bible passage. Notice that the people turned away from God were doing what they pleased. Therefore God said He would cast them out of the land.

Jeremiah

016:010 And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?

016:011 Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law;

016:012 And ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me:

016:013 Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not shew you favour.

The following is one of the punishments for turning away from God.

Jeremiah

016:001 The word of the LORD came also unto me, saying,

016:002 Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place.

016:003 For thus saith the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land;

016:004 They shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be lamented; neither shall they be buried; but they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

Jeremiah

021:007 And afterward, saith the LORD, I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy.

021:008 And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death.

021:009 He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey.

021:010 For I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.

In the following prophecy, God declares that the Israelis would be defeated by the Babylonians and after 70 years God would punish the Babylonians and they would return from their captivity.

Jeremiah

025:009 Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.

025:010 Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.

025:011 And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

025:012 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

Judgment Example - Judgment Of Apostates circa 605- 589 BC

There was a temple to God in Jerusalem during the time Judah was in idolatry. But people were only going thru the motions of worshiping God and their hearts were far from him. They also worshiped idols and lived as they pleased. And even the high priest of God's temple persecuted Jeremiah, God's true prophet.

Jeremiah

020:001 Now Pashur the son of Immer the priest, who was also chief governor in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things.

020:002 Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of the LORD.

020:003 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Pashur brought forth Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, The LORD hath not called thy name Pashur, but Magormissabib.

020:004 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it: and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword.

020:005 Moreover I will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon.

020:006 And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity: and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied lies.

Notice in the following passages that the priests of God's temple wanted to kill Jeremiah. The problem with their 'religion' was that their hearts were far from God. They were following religious rituals but they were not following God. The priests hated Jeremiah for the message he gave and wanted to kill him. In the end, the issue was given to the princes of Jerusalem and they declared that Jeremiah did nothing wrong. One lesson from this story is that religious leaders can be more dangerous than the civil authorities.

Jeremiah

026:002 Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD's house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word:

026:003 If So, be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings.

026:004 And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you,

026:005 To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them, but ye have not hearkened;

026:006 Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.

Jeremiah

026:008 Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die.

Jeremiah

026:011 Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy to die; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

026:012 Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard.

026:013 Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

Jeremiah

026:016 Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man is not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.

Notice how the government in Jerusalem treated Jeremiah because of his prophecies against them.

Jeremiah

038:004 Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt.

038:005 Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing against you.

038:006 Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: So, Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

Jeremiah was placed into prison by his king. After the city was taken by the Babylonians, notice how the Babylonian king treated Jeremiah. Notice he treated Jeremiah better than the Israeli king.

Jeremiah

039:011 Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying,

039:012 Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee.

Judgment Example - Judgments in Ezekiel circa 594-587 BC

The following judgment was given before the fall of Jerusalem. Notice verse 12 which mentions how God would punish them – with pestilence, famine, war, and being cast out of their land.

Ezekiel

- 005:008 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations.
- 005:009 And I will do in thee that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, because of all thine abominations.
- 005:010 Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds.
- 005:011 Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD; Surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity.
- 005:012 A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.

A little further God says,

Ezekiel

- 005:017 So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee: and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it.

In the following passage, God says He would make the land desolate. The land is still rather desolate – it is not a land of ‘milk and honey’. It seems the judgment is still on that land.

Ezekiel

- 006:014 So will I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblah, in all their habitations: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Why all these judgments? According to the following, it is So, a remnant will turn back to God

Ezekiel

- 006:009 And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.
- 006:010 And they shall know that I am the LORD, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them.

What was the great sin? The book of Ezekiel lists several. The following passage names one. It is included as an example. See in particular the last few words of verse 16 and verse 18.

Ezekiel

- 008:016 And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.

008:017 Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose.

008:018 Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

Notice the following verse states that the Israelis were not worried about God because they believed God was ignoring the earth. But this was a wrong belief.

Ezekiel.

009:009 Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not.

The following passage warns that some people many not worship idol statues but instead have 'idols in their heart' – ie, they love something,

Ezekiel

014:002 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

014:003 Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?

014:004 Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;

Notice the 4 judgments (or punishments) of God mentioned in verse 21. The term 'sword' refers to war. These were coming to the nation of Judea because of their sin. But also notice verse 22 which talks about a remnant. God does punish nations even when there is a small remnant that has remained faithful to Him.

Ezekiel

014:021 For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?

014:022 Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it.

Why was God judging Israel? Several reasons are listed in Ezekiel chapter 22 verses 22-31. In verse 26, God condemns the priests for violating His law and calling good things which are evil. In verse 27, God condemns the princes for preying on people and getting dishonest gain. In verse 28, God condemns false prophets for claiming they received a prophecy from God when they did not. In verse 29, God condemns ordinary people for oppressing people, robbery, taking advantage of the poor, and oppressing foreigners (ie, the 'strangers'). In verse 30, God said there was no good person in Israel to protect. In verse 31, God pronounces judgment.

Ezekiel

022:026 Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

- 022:027 Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.
- 022:028 And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken.
- 022:029 The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.
- 022:030 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.
- 022:031 Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD.

One more note on Ezekiel chapter 22 verse 26. Many people enjoy religious rituals. But following religious rituals does not make a person right with God. In several places in the Bible, God likens the nation of Israel to a whore or an adulterous. Someone who follows rituals but is unfaithful, whose heart is far away, someone who is a make believer.

The following judgment was made against a country because of its vengeance.

Ezekiel

- 025:015 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred;
- 025:016 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of the sea coast.
- 025:017 And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.

One of the most amazing prophecies in the Bible is the destruction of Tyrus (also known as Tyre). The city was taken by Babylon. But it was not totally destroyed at that time. Notice verse 4 and verse 12 below. About 250 years after this prophecy, Alexander the Great had all the stones and debris from Tyrus thrown into the sea to make a causeway to an island. (Note: There were 2 parts to the city. One part was on the mainland and the other part was an island off shore. Alexander the Great tore down the part on the mainland to make a causeway to this island.)

Ezekiel

- 026:001 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
- 026:002 Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste:
- 026:003 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.
- 026:004 And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock.
- 026:005 It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD: and it shall become a spoil to the nations.
- 026:006 And her daughters which are in the field shall be slain by the sword; and they shall know that I am the LORD.
- 026:007 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people.
- 026:008 He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field: and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mount against thee, and lift up the buckler against thee.

026:009 And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers.

026:010 By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach.

026:011 With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy strong garrisons shall go down to the ground.

026:012 And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.

026:013 And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard.

026:014 And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

Another amazing prophecy is that against Egypt listed in Ezekiel. The following are the high points of the prophecy. It starts

Ezekiel

029:001 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, in the twelfth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

029:002 Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt:

It continues

Ezekiel

029:010 Behold, therefore I am against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia.

029:011 No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years.

029:012 And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

029:013 Yet thus saith the Lord GOD; At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered:

029:014 And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom.

Now the most remarkable part of the prophecy against Egypt

Ezekiel

029:015 It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.

Notice that God said He was doing this to Egypt. It continues

Ezekiel

030:013 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt.

Noph is the city of Memphis – the Egyptian capital. This city was destroyed and today there are just a few statues there. People no longer worship idols there. The Egyptians no longer have an Egyptian pharaoh.

Notice one of the reasons why Egypt was judged.

Ezekiel

031:010 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast lifted up thyself in height, and he hath shot up his top among the thick boughs, and his heart is lifted up in his height;

031:011 I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen; he shall surely deal with him: I have driven him out for his wickedness.

Other verses make it clear the 'mighty one of the heathen' is Babylon.

The following passage gives reasons why God cast the Israelis out of the land.

Ezekiel

033:023 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

033:024 Son of man, they that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: but we are many; the land is given us for inheritance.

033:025 Wherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Ye eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes toward your idols, and shed blood: and shall ye possess the land?

033:026 Ye stand upon your sword, ye work abomination, and ye defile every one his neighbour's wife: and shall ye possess the land?

033:027 Say thou thus unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword, and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured, and they that be in the forts and in the caves shall die of the pestilence.

033:028 For I will lay the land most desolate, and the pomp of her strength shall cease; and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through.

033:029 Then shall they know that I am the LORD, when I have laid the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed.

The following judgment was given against Seir because of their hatred and war against Israel. This should be a warning to those who would attack Israel. God may punish Israel.

Ezekiel

035:001 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

035:002 Son of man, set thy face against mount Seir, and prophesy against it,

035:003 And say unto it, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate.

035:004 I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.

035:005 Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end:

035:006 Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee.

035:007 Thus will I make mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth.

035:008 And I will fill his mountains with his slain men: in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers, shall they fall that are slain with the sword.

035:009 I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

035:010 Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the LORD was there:

035:011 Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will even do according to thine anger, and according to thine envy which thou hast used out of thy hatred against them; and I will make myself known among them, when I have judged thee.

Judgment Example – Jeremiah’s Prophecy for Nations Around Israel circa 588

The following passage is a warning God gave to people who remained in Judah. At the time of this warning, Babylon had conquered Jerusalem and carried away many. There was a remnant that remained. God warned this remnant should stay in Judah and not go to Egypt. He promised them safety there. But if they did not believe God and flee to Egypt to avoid war and get food, then they would be caught up in war.

Jeremiah

042:011 Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the LORD: for I am with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand.

042:012 And I will shew mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land.

042:013 But if ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the LORD your God,

042:014 Saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell:

042:015 And now therefore hear the word of the LORD, ye remnant of Judah; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; If ye wholly set your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there;

042:016 Then it shall come to pass, that the sword, which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die.

The following verse explains why. God planned to punish the nations around Judah.

Jeremiah

046:017 They did cry there, Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise; he hath passed the time appointed.

046:018 As I live, saith the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts, Surely as Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, So, shall he come.

046:019 O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt, furnish thyself to go into captivity: for Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant.

Jeremiah

048:004 Moab is destroyed; her little ones have caused a cry to be heard.

048:005 For in the going up of Luhith continual weeping shall go up; for in the going down of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction.

048:006 Flee, save your lives, and be like the heath in the wilderness.

048:007 For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt also be taken: and Chemosh shall go forth into captivity with his priests and his princes together.

Jeremiah

048:042 And Moab shall be destroyed from being a people, because he hath magnified himself against the LORD.

Jeremiah

048:047 Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far is the judgment of Moab.

Jeremiah

049:001 Concerning the Ammonites, thus saith the LORD; Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then doth their king inherit Gad, and his people dwell in his cities?

049:002 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Rabbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the LORD.

049:003 Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled: cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, gird you with sackcloth; lament, and run to and fro by the hedges; for their king shall go into captivity, and his priests and his princes together.

Jeremiah

049:007 Concerning Edom, thus saith the LORD of hosts; Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished?

049:008 Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan; for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, the time that I will visit him.

049:009 If grapegatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough.

049:010 But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours, and he is not.

049:011 Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.

Jeremiah

027:006 And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

027:007 And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.

027:008 And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.

Judgment against the city of Petra is below:

Jeremiah

049:016 Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the LORD.

049:017 Also Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.

049:018 As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.

Judgment Example – Judgment of Jerusalem Circa 588

Notice that the following verses give 2 reasons why Jerusalem was destroyed. The reasons were (1) Jerusalem grievously sinned and (2) God is righteous.

Lamentations

001:008 Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she is removed: all that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness: yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.

Lamentations

001:018 The LORD is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow: my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

In the following passage, “Thy” refers to Jerusalem. In that day, the false prophets did not see the real reasons why Jerusalem was destroyed. This is similar to today. Today people discuss economic reasons or political reasons why there are economic recessions and wars. But today no one in the media talks about possible judgment of God against a nation.

Lamentations

002:014 Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment.

Judgment Example – Babylon - Hand Writing On The Wall circa 538

The last chapters of Jeremiah (chapters 49 and following) list judgments of God against the countries around Judah. Of these, perhaps the most interesting is the prophecy against Babylon.

Jeremiah

050:001 The word that the LORD spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet.

050:002 Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.

050:003 For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.

Notice that God said He would raise up this nation and God said He would cause this nation to attack Babylon.

Jeremiah

050:009 For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain.

Once again, in the following passage, God repeats that He is punishing Babylon

Jeremiah

050:018 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.

Why did God punish Babylon? One reason is in the following verse. The reason is that Babylon strove against God.

Jeremiah

050:024 I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD.

Another reason is that Babylon was a proud nation as mentioned below.

Jeremiah

050:029 Call together the archers against Babylon: all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

Another reason is because of all their idols.

Jeremiah

050:038 A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols.

Notice in the following verses, God states that Babylon will become desolate forever. This prophecy has been fulfilled.

Jeremiah

050:038 A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols.

050:039 Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

050:040 As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD; So, shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.

Notice who would conquer Babylon according to the prophecy

Jeremiah

050:041 Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

050:042 They shall hold the bow and the lance: they are cruel, and will not shew mercy: their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, every one put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon.

The prophet Daniel led the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar to a knowledge, and possibly a saving faith, in the one true God. After the king died, his son ruled and his grandson was the second in command of the nation. But they did not know God and the Babylonian nation fell during their reign. The story explains why God judged that nation. The story starts in Daniel chapter 5. Notice how the king did not believe in God and notice in verse 3 how he regarded God.

Daniel

005:001 Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

005:002 Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein.

005:003 Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.

005:004 They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

So God judged Babylon and gave a sign to the king at the banquet.

Daniel

005:005 In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

005:006 Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, So, that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

The passage goes on to say no one could give an interpretation. So, the king called in Daniel, because it was known that God's spirit was with him. Daniel begins by explaining that the king should have known better. He points out how God intervened in the life of king Nebuchadnezzar and humbled him. And how Nebuchadnezzar came to a knowledge of God. But the current king failed to learn from this but failed to know God and "lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven".

Daniel

005:017 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

- 005:018 O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:
- 005:019 And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.
- 005:020 But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:
- 005:021 And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.
- 005:022 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;
- 005:023 But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

Daniel then gives the interpretation of the handwriting on the wall and the subsequent events that very night.

Daniel

- 005:024 Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.
- 005:025 And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.
- 005:026 This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.
- 005:027 TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.
- 005:028 PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.
- 005:029 Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.
- 005:030 In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.
- 005:031 And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

Judgment Example – Amalek Judged for Attacking Israel Circa 508 BC

God punishes countries which attack Israel, even when Israel is out of God's will.

The judgment is an interesting story of why God utterly destroyed the tribe, or nation, of Amalek. This judgment was an order by God to kill all people in the tribe, including women, children, infants, and all their livestock. But why would God order such a harsh sentence on these people?

The story of Amalek starts in Genesis, about 1920BC and ends in about 509 BC, about 1400 years later. This story illustrates God judges nations as well as individuals. This story also shows how long suffering God is, given people a very long time, in this case centuries, to repent and follow Him. They had the opportunity to know him but turned their back on Him. God warned Israel of the Amalekites and His warnings proved true as they repeatedly attacked Israel. Even after the Amalekites were destroyed, the descendant of a survivor tried to exterminate Israel.

Amalek was tribe or nation in Palestine. Genesis mentions in Genesis chapter 36 that one of Esau's descendants became a ruler of Amalek. But the tribe existed long before Esau. The Amarna tablets refer to them under the general title of 'plunderers'. The following passage shows Amalek existed before Esau.

Genesis

- 014:001 And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations;
- 014:002 That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar.
- 014:003 All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea.
- 014:004 Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.
- 014:005 And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim,
- 014:006 And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan, which is by the wilderness.
- 014:007 And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezontamar.

Four hundred years later, Israel left Egypt and went thru the Wilderness. During this journey, before they entered the land, the Amaleks attacked them. This occurred around 1491BC. This is before the period in which Israel wandered in the Wilderness.

Exodus

- 017:005 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.
- 017:006 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did So, in the sight of the elders of Israel.
- 017:007 And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?

017:008 Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

017:009 And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

017:010 So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

017:011 And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

017:012 But Moses hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

017:013 And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

017:014 And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

017:015 And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi:

017:016 For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

The Amalekites lived in the southern end of Palistine.

Numbers

013:029 The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

Where these good people? No.

Leviticus

018:021 And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

018:022 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

018:023 Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.

018:024 Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you:

Was God hasty in judgment? No. Remember there a delay in when God gave Abraham the promise of Palestine and when they actually went into it? Remember, they spent 400 years in Egypt. See the answer in Gen 15:13-16 – especially the last phrase in verse 16. Notice God gave the Amorites 400 years to change their ways. Where the Amorites, etc, ignorant of God and their pending judgment? No. Notice Josh 2:9-11 states they knew Israel's God was the true God for at least 40 years and they could have turned to God and be spared like the harlot Rahab. If the Amorites knew this, it is likely the Amalekites knew this too.

The first recorded attack of Israel against the Amalekites occurred after the 40 years of wandering in the Wilderness. It ended in defeat for Israel because they had turned away from God.

Numbers

014:041 And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall not prosper.

014:042 Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies.

014:043 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you.

014:044 But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp.

014:045 Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.

As the Israelis were taking over the land, one king hired the prophet Balak to curse Israel. He could not. Balak gave several prophecies which included the following around 1452BC.

Numbers

024:020 And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever.

When taking the land around 1452BC, the Israelis were reminded of the evil done to them and were ordered to eliminate the Amalekites:

Deuteronomy

025:017 Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;

025:018 How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.

025:019 Therefore it shall be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it.

About 46 years later, around 1406BC, the Israelis had not eliminated the Amalekites. This was during the time of the Judges. During this period, the Israelis often followed other gods, were punished by God, repented, and then were rescued by God. Around 1406 God used the Amalekites to punish Israel after they sinned.

Judges

003:012 And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.

003:013 And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees.

And again in around 1249, 103 years after God ordered Israel to destroy the Amalekites, God used the Amalekites to punish Israel.

Judges

- 006:001 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years.
- 006:002 And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel: and because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds.
- 006:003 And So, it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, even they came up against them;
- 006:004 And they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass.
- 006:005 For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it.
- 006:006 And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the LORD.

But God always delivered or rescued them from the Amalekites.

Judges

- 010:011 And the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines?
- 010:012 The Zidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, did oppress you; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand.
- 010:013 Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more.
- 010:014 Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

Around 1079BC, 373 years after God ordered the destruction of the Amalekites, the prophet Samuel tells King Saul it is time that the Amalekites be destroyed.

1 Samuel

- 015:001 Samuel also said unto Saul, The LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD.
- 015:002 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.
- 015:003 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

This may seem extreme. But notice how generation after generation they attacked Israel. And notice what almost happened when Saul tried sparing the life of 1 Amalekite.

1 Samuel

015:009 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

1 Samuel

015:020 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

015:021 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

015:022 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

Notice that because of Saul's refusal to obey God, God rejected Saul as King

1 Samuel

015:023 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

1 Samuel

015:032 Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past.

015:033 And Samuel said, As the sword hath made women childless, So, shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

Notice that a descendant of Agag survived. In the following story from the book of Esther, an ancestor of Agag tried to eliminate all Jews. This story is from about 515BC, about 564 years after the destruction of the Amalekites. Note that Haman, an 'Agagite' is just another way of saying 'descendant of Agag'.

Esther

003:001 After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.

003:002 And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and revered Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.

003:003 Then the king's servants, which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?

003:004 Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew.

003:005 And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

003:006 And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

The following is his treachery to destroy Israel.

Esther

003:008 And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

003:009 If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries.

003:010 And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.

003:011 And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

Notice what Haman ordered:

Esther

003:012 Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.

003:013 And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.

But God rescued the Jews because He caused Esther, a Jew, to become queen. Haman did not know she was a Jew. And Esther interceded for her people with the king. And he spared the Jews.

Esther

007:001 So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.

007:002 And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom.

007:003 Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request:

007:004 For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.

007:005 Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?

007:006 And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

007:007 And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

007:008 Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As the word went out of king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

007:009 And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon.

007:010 So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

That ends the story of the Amalekites and their treachery.

If God did not spare the Amalekites, will he spare nations today that turn their back on Him? God did not spare the people at the time of Noah. There are prophecies of the latter dates of this earth called the Great Tribulation period. Those prophecies say it will be the worst period the earth ever experiences.

There are a few other stories regarding the Amalekites.

1 Samuel

027:008 And David and his men went up, and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites: for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.

027:009 And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.

After Samuel died, king Saul tried getting a message from him thru the witch of Endor. There is controversy as to what spirit came to Saul in Endor. Was it Samuel or was it another spirit that Saul perceived was Samuel? The following was the message from that spirit:

1 Samuel

028:018 Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day.

This shows that Saul did not eliminate the Amalekites as he was commanded. Later, David fought the Amalekites:

1 Samuel

030:001 And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;

030:002 And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.

030:003 So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.

1 Samuel

030:008 And David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.

1 Samuel

030:017 And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled.

Judgment Example - Nation Cursed For Robbing God circa 397 BC

In this passage, God declares He will decrease the economy of Israel because they did not give the required tithes and offerings.

Malachi

003:008 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

003:009 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

003:010 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

003:011 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

003:012 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

Judgment Example – More Stories of Judah and Israel circa 1056-610 BC

Punishment it to the entire country – the people and the government.

1 Samuel

012:024 Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.

012:025 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

Example How God judges rulers

1 Samuel

015:020 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

015:021 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

015:022 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

015:023 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

God Rejects King Saul circa 1056 BC

God gave Israel judges to govern the nation. It was a theocracy. However, the nation eventually demanded a king and chose one. God agreed to give them what they wanted even though this was a rebellion. Their king was evil and God eventually deposed him. This history is also recored in Kings and in Chronicles.

When God says something once, it is important. When God says something 3 times, it is very important. And these lessons are very important.

1 Samuel

015:023 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

1 Chronicles

010:013 So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;

010:014 And enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

Tribulation During King Jehoahaz Reign circa 840 BC

Notice in this short passage, that Israel fell into sin, was punished by God, repented, and was delivered by God.

2 Kings

- 013:001 In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years.
- 013:002 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.
- 013:003 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael, all their days.
- 013:004 And Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.
- 013:005 (And the LORD gave Israel a saviour, So, that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime.

Praise and Criticism of King Jehoaddan circa 839 BC

2 Kings

- 014:002 He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.
- 014:003 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like David his father: he did according to all things as Joash his father did.
- 014:004 Howbeit the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice and burnt incense on the high places.

Warning to King Solomon circa 1004 BC

Although this message is to Israel, it contains a principle of God's rule which is important to all. Notice it warns that God will afflict the land when his people turn from him and will restore the land when they return to Him. Will God do the same for other peoples?

2 Chronicles

- 007:012 And the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice.
- 007:013 If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people;
- 007:014 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles

- 007:019 But if ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them;

007:020 Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it to be a proverb and a byword among all nations.

007:021 And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to every one that passeth by it; So, that he shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and unto this house?

007:022 And it shall be answered, Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them.

Sin of King Rehoboam circa 974

Same story... King Rehoboam and Israel fell into sin, was punished, returned to God and they were delivered.

2 Chronicles

012:001 And it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel with him.

012:002 And it came to pass, that in the fifth year of king Rehoboam Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the LORD,

012:003 With twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people were without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians.

012:004 And he took the fenced cities which pertained to Judah, and came to Jerusalem.

012:005 Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and to the princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak.

012:006 Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves; and they said, The LORD is righteous.

012:007 And when the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.

012:008 Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.

012:009 So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

012:010 Instead of which king Rehoboam made shields of brass, and committed them to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house.

012:011 And when the king entered into the house of the LORD, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard chamber.

012:012 And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not destroy him altogether: and also in Judah things went well.

Blessing of God to Judah when they followed Him. Asa was the king. Circa 951 BC

2 Chronicles

014:002 And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God:

014:003 For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves:

014:004 And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment.

014:005 Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him.

014:006 And he built fenced cities in Judah: for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the LORD had given him rest.

014:007 Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls, and towers, gates, and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So, they built and prospered.

In war, God helped Judah.

2 Chronicles

014:009 And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah.

014:010 Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.

014:011 And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let no man prevail against thee.

014:012 So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.

2 Chronicles

015:001 And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:

015:002 And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

015:003 Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.

015:004 But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.

015:005 And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries.

015:006 And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity.

015:007 Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.

015:008 And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD, that was before the porch of the LORD.

Notice that King Asa was view by God as a good king. Notice the reasons why. Notice one criticism of him. But please note that in the New Testament, God instructs Christians to be tolerant (not acceptant, but tolerant).

1 Kings

015:011 And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father.

015:012 And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

015:013 And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron.

015:014 But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days.

Sin of Unholy Alliance – circa 941 BC

At this time, the Jewish nation was split in 2. The northern kingdom was called Israel and the southern kingdom was called Judah. At this time, the northern kingdom was in idolatry while the souther kingdom worshiped God. The king of Judah as Asa and he was good. In the past, God helped Asa and Judah in battle. But in this story, king Asa made a treaty with Syria (which was pagan/evil) when Israel attacked Judah.

2 Chronicles

016:001 In the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

016:002 Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Benhadad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

016:003 There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

016:004 And Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abelmaim, and all the store cities of Naphtali.

Because Asa trusted in the evil nation of Syria rather than God, God declared punishment on Judah.

2 Chronicles

016:007 And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

016:008 Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand.

016:009 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

War was a judgment of God because King Jehoram followed other gods – circa 889 BC

2 Chronicles

021:009 Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots.

021:010 So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time also did Libnah revolt from under his hand; because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers.

Sickness was a judgment of God against King Jehoram for being pagan and causing his people to worship other gods (ie, "commit fornication"). Note: Elijah was not around when Jehoram ruled. So, Elijah must have written this prophecy before Jehoram came to the throne.

2 Chronicles

021:011 Moreover he made high places in the mountains of Judah and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication, and compelled Judah thereto.

021:012 And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah,

021:013 But hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself:

021:014 Behold, with a great plague will the LORD smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods:

021:015 And thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day.

021:016 Moreover the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians:

021:017 And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; So, that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

021:018 And after all this the LORD smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease.

021:019 And it came to pass, that in process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: So, he died of sore diseases. And his people made no burning for him, like the burning of his fathers.

Failings of King Manasseh circa 698

King Manasseh was the son of king Hezekiah. King Hezekiah was one of the best kings (godly kings) of Judah but Manasseh was the worst as recorded below.

2 Chronicles

033:001 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem:

033:002 But did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

033:003 For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

033:004 Also he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever.

033:005 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

033:006 And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

Notice that God punished him and Judah

2 Chronicles

033:009 So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.

033:010 And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken.

033:011 Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

Eventually, Manasseh came to the true God

2 Chronicles

033:012 And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers,

033:013 And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.

Judah's Return to God, then Retured to Idolatry circa 630-610 BC

Josiah became king of Judah when he was 8 years old, about 630BC. Unlike his father, he looked for God in the Jewish scriptures. In them he learned of God's anger to idolatry. The following passage tells the story.

2 Chronicles

034:020 And the king commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying,

034:021 Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book.

034:022 And Hilkiah, and they that the king had appointed, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvath, the son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college:) and they spake to her to that effect.

034:023 And she answered them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell ye the man that sent you to me,

034:024 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah:

- 034:025 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched.
- 034:026 And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to enquire of the LORD, So, shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel concerning the words which thou hast heard;
- 034:027 Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD.
- 034:028 Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So, they brought the king word again.

Then, years later after Josiah died, Judah fell back into idolatry and they killed God's messengers or prophets. So, God let another country conquer Judah.

2 Chronicles

- 036:015 And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place:
- 036:016 But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.
- 036:017 Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.
- 036:018 And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon.
- 036:019 And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.
- 036:020 And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:
- 036:021 To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.
- 036:022 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,
- 036:023 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.

Judgment Example – Summary

A pattern can be seen in the examples described earlier. The nation abandoned God and did despicable things. God sent prophets and messengers. But they were ignored. God punished the nation. Sometimes the people returned to God and godly ways. The following bible verse summarizes one of these periods. But it is a good summary for many of them.

2 Chronicles

036:014 Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.

036:015 And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place:

036:016 But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.

036:017 Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.

036:018 And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon.

Citizenship Responsibilities – Courts

Personal Responsibility

The Bible teaches personal responsibility for one's actions. People may have grown up in a bad environment. But ultimately, each of us is responsible for our own actions. This is especially brought out in the book of Ezekiel, chapter 18, in the Bible. The entire chapter should be read. But the following passages are included here as highlights from this chapter.

The Israelis had a proverb stating that the sons pay for the sins of the father. But God refutes this in Ezekiel chapter 18, especially verses 1-4.

Ezekiel

018:001 The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,

018:002 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

018:003 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.

018:004 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, So, also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

God then rephrases this several times in this chapter to insure people understand. The following is one of the shortest statements on this.

Ezekiel

018:020 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

God then concludes the teaching with the following 3 verses. In them He calls for our repentance and states that He has no pleasure in our deaths.

Ezekiel

018:030 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; So, iniquity shall not be your ruin.

018:031 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

018:032 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

So how does this apply to us today? If we are being punished by God, it is for something we have done.

So how does this apply to us today? We are guilty of our own sins. We cannot push off our guilt because of circumstances. And courts should judge people the same way. They should judge a person for what they have done. Even if a guilty person came from a bad background, they are still responsible for their actions. You cannot blame someone else for your illegal acts.

Testifying In Court

The Bible also teaches it is a sin not to testify in court (public).

Leviticus 5:1

005:001 And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity

In the time of Moses, some people sacrificed their children to the god Molech. God condemned this practice and in the following passage stated He will punish people who ignore neighbors who do this.

Leviticus

020:001 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

020:002 Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones.

020:003 And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name.

020:004 And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, and kill him not:

020:005 Then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people.

God also holds a community responsible for crimes such as murder.

Deuteronomy

021:001 If one be found slain in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him:

021:002 Then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain:

021:003 And it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke;

021:004 And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley:

021:005 And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for them the LORD thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the LORD; and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried:

021:006 And all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley:

021:007 And they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.

021:008 Be merciful, O LORD, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them.

021:009 So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD.

I believe the point is, God holds a community responsible for upholding the law.

The Bible also teaches against perjury.

Proverbs

006:016 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:
 006:017 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,
 006:018 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,
 006:019 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Prov

019:005 A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.

Prov

019:009 A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish.

Exodus

020:016 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Deuteronomy

005:020 Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Advice To Christians

1 Corinthians

006:001 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?
 006:002 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?
 006:003 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?
 006:004 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.
 006:005 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?
 006:006 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.
 006:007 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?
 006:008 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

Based on First Corinthians 6:1, would it be better for Christians to have Christian judges? Would it be better if only Christians were appointed to be judges? By "Christian", I mean true Christians.

Timely Justice

The bible also issues a warning of what happens when government fails to execute justice on a timely basis. And you see it happening in the riots of 2020 when governments failed to act against the rioters.

Ecclesiastes

008:011 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

One reason why some governmental bodies fail to act against criminals is mentioned in the following passage.

Proverbs

028:005 Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things.

Citizenship Responsibilities - Call to Warn People – Be a Watchman

Police say, 'if you see something, then say something'. They want people to report crimes or other suspicious activity like packages left behind on busses or transit stations because they could be terrorist bombs. Well, the bible says something similar. If we see evil, we need to warn people of it. This means if we see someone sinning openly, to warn them. But this can be taken to higher level. If we see a nation sinning or passing immoral laws, we should speak out too (see Ezekiel chapter 33 verses below).

Ezekiel

003:018 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

003:019 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

And again, God repeats His warning. When the Bible states something, it is important. When the Bible says it twice, it is urgent that we take note.

Ezekiel

003:020 Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

003:021 Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.

This message is So, important that years later, God repeats it

Ezekiel

003:001 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

003:002 Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman:

003:003 If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;

003:004 Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

003:005 He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

003:006 But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

003:007 So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

033:008 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

033:009 Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul

Why did the people not turn to God? Because they did not want to. When people love their sin, they are blinded to God's word.

Ezekiel

012:001 The word of the LORD also came unto me, saying,

012:002 Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house.

Unfortunately, there are prophets (or today, some preachers) who teach from their hearts and not from God's word.

Ezekiel

013:001 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

013:002 Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the LORD;

013:003 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!

Citizenship Responsibilities - Pray for Rulers and the Nation

Christians to Pray That They May Live in Peace

Notice in the following Bible Passage, Christians are told to pray for their leaders. What are we to pray for? The ability to live in peace. Why? There are countries and people within countries which still persecute Christians. This is true even in the US where some governments have passed laws limiting freedom of religion (contrary to the US Constitution). We should pray that we can live a good life and, according to verse 4, So, others can be saved by learning about Him.

1 Timothy

002:001 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

002:002 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

002:003 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

002:004 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

002:005 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

But let's go back to verse 2. Notice what it says, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness". As of this writing, there are government bodies in the US which force bakers and photographers to perform services for gay weddings even if they feel it is sinful. This issue is discussed more in the section about discrimination and tolerance. But it should be pointed out that Christians need to pray for religious freedom as stated in the passage above.

Notice verse 5 above. It says there is only 1 mediator between us and God and that mediator is Jesus. What does that say about the "saints" that some people pray to?

Confess Sins Of Country And Ask Forgiveness

There is an interesting prayer of the prophet Daniel in Daniel chapter 9. What is interesting about it is that Daniel is praying for the people of Israel (or Judah). What is interesting about this prayer is that he confesses the sins of Israel, acknowledges that the bad things which have happened to them is a punishment from God, and he asks God to forgive the sins of his nation/people. It is also interesting that Daniel did not pray for punishment of the countries which conquered the Israelis.

The prayer can teach us much. First, it teaches us how to pray – or at least one kind of prayer. It also teaches that this is God's world. He has and does punish countries. And it gives some reasons why God will punish a country.

In this first section of Daniel's prayer, he acknowledges that God is faithful and shows mercy to them that love Him and keep His commandments.

Daniel

009:001 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

009:002 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

009:003 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

009:004 And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

He then confesses the sins of the nation stating “we” have sinned and rebelled against God. He does not point the finger at other people. But he uses the word “we” to acknowledge national sin.

Daniel

009:005 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

009:006 Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

009:007 O LORD, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

009:008 O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

009:009 To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;

009:010 Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

Daniel then acknowledges that the bad things which have occurred to them is the punishment from God for their sins. And he acknowledges that God had warned them of this thru His judges and prophets.

Daniel

009:011 Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

009:012 And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

009:013 As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.

Daniel next declares that God is just and righteous in what He did because they did not obey Him.

Daniel

009:014 Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice.

Daniel then concludes by asking God’s forgiveness, not because of their righteousness or good living, but rather because God is merciful.

Daniel

009:015 And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

- 009:016 O LORD, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.
- 009:017 Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.
- 009:018 O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.
- 009:019 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

It should be remembered that God stated thru another prophet that He would forgive the nation if they would turn to Him. So, Daniel prayer was consistent with what God had instructed.

Prayers of Forgiveness

Nehemiah wrote one of the books of the Bible of the Old Testament. Actually, he wrote the last 'historic' (as opposed to prophetic) book of the Old Testament. The setting of his book is this. The country of Israel split into 2 parts or kingdoms many years before. These 2 countries went into idolatry and both were conquered by other countries. The people of the southern kingdom went into captivity into Babylon. After 70 years, they were allowed to return. Nehemiah did not return with the first group. But he did return several years later to rebuild Jerusalem.

One of the things interesting about Nehemiah's prayer is that Nehemiah prayed "we have" when confessing the sins of the country.

Nehemiah

- 001:005 And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments:
- 001:006 Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.
- 001:007 We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.
- 001:008 Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:
- 001:009 But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.

The point is, it is good to pray, confess the sins of the country, and for mercy and forgiveness of the country. It is also important to pray that the people return to God.

King Solomon's Prayer for the Nation of Israel

The following is an interesting example of a prayer for a nation.

King Solomon prayed the following on the dedication of the new temple. Notice that in his prayer, moved by the Spirit, he mentions certain sins that will cause punishment to the nation.

1 Kings

- 008:022 And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:
- 008:023 And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:
- 008:024 Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day.
- 008:025 Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; So, that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me.
- 008:026 And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.
- 008:027 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?
- 008:028 Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to day:
- 008:029 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.
- 008:030 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive.
- 008:031 If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house:
- 008:032 Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.
- 008:033 When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house:
- 008:034 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.
- 008:035 When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:
- 008:036 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.
- 008:037 If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be;
- 008:038 What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house:
- 008:039 Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)
- 008:040 That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.
- 008:041 Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;
- 008:042 (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house;

- 008:043 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.
- 008:044 If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name:
- 008:045 Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.
- 008:046 If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, So, that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near;
- 008:047 Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;
- 008:048 And So, return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:
- 008:049 Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause,
- 008:050 And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them:
- 008:051 For they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron:
- 008:052 That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee.
- 008:053 For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O LORD God.

Prayer for Justice

Jesus also taught that we should keep praying for justice and not give up or grow faint doing it. In His parable, Jesus did not say what kind of justice the woman sought. She could have been asking for justice because of oppression from a person, or even the government. So, when we pray, should we not ask for justice in national matters? If Congress or the Executive Branch does a wrong, should not Christians pray for justice? It is not for people to seek revenge. But we can pray for justice? Notice verses 7 and 8.

Luke

- 018:001 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;
- 018:002 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:
- 018:003 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.
- 018:004 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;
- 018:005 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.
- 018:006 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.
- 018:007 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?
- 018:008 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Pray That Rules Will Allow Teaching/Preaching of God's Word (Bible)

There are governments and people in authority who do not want the bible to be taught. Some countries outright ban preaching/teaching the bible to non-believers. They believe their religion is correct and will not tolerate Christians who teach the bible to Muslims. And there are people in the US who hinder the teaching of the bible. For example, some want to prevent the bible being taught in schools and want to discourage parents from sending their children to parochial schools. We are to pray that we may be free in spreading the good news of the gospel/bible.

2 Thessalonians

003:001 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:

003:002 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

003:003 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

Citizenship Responsibilities - Obey Government

Notice God commands believers to obey government. God does not state that we should obey only certain types of government. Yes, the Bible says it is better to obey God than man. But So, long as government does not require people to disobey God's command, then government's laws are to be obeyed.

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

013:005 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

013:006 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

013:007 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

Titus

003:001 Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,

1 Peter

002:013 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

002:014 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

002:015 For So, is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

002:016 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

002:017 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

Matthew

022:015 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

022:016 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

022:017 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

022:018 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

022:019 Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.

022:020 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

022:021 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

022:022 When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

Mark

012:013 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words.

012:014 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?

012:015 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it.

012:016 And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's.

012:017 And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

Luke

020:021 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly:

020:022 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?

020:023 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

020:024 Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's.

020:025 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

The following refers to religious leaders or rulers.

Hebrews

013:017 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

Is there ever a time when it is OK to disobey government or rulers? Actually, yes, if what they say is a direct contradiction of what God says in the bible. The following is an example.

Acts

005:024 Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

005:025 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

005:026 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

005:027 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

005:028 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

005:029 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Note that we are to obey government unless doing So, would be a sin.

Mark records the commandment of Jesus

Mark

016:015 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

So in this case, Jesus' disciples were following the commandment of God rather than the command of the priest – which was the correct thing to do. Also, notice that they were preaching in God's temple.

The following is another important passage on this topic. In it, we are instructed not to participate in sinful acts of others. So, long as a government law does not force us to engage in a sinful activity, we are to obey. But we cannot simply obey government and claim we are immune from guilt simply by saying we were only obeying a higher civil authority. (Remember, that is even true in the secular world. Remember how the courts said to German soldiers they could not use that defense as an excuse for killing Jewish people during WW2.)

Ephesians

005:011 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

005:012 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

Point is, sometimes governments may demand things which are completely contrary to God's word. In such cases, Christians should obey God and not the government.

One illustration is the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They were ordered by king Nebuchadnezzar to worship a false god. They chose to disobey the king and God protected them for it.

Daniel

003:013 Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.

003:014 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

003:015 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

003:016 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

003:017 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

003:018 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

003:019 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

003:020 And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

003:021 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

003:022 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flames of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

003:023 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

- 003:024 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.
- 003:025 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.
- 003:026 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire.
- 003:027 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.
- 003:028 Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.
- 003:029 Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.
- 003:030 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.

Another illustration is in the prophecy of the Great Tribulation period. In that time, there will be a world government controlled by Satan. During that time, all who buy or sell must have the mark of 'the beast'.

Revelation

- 013:015 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.
- 013:016 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:
- 013:017 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

But notice the warning and judgment that shall fall on those who take the mark of the beast.

Revelation

- 014:009 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,
- 014:010 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

The book of Jude in the Bible talks of apostacy that is entering the Church and warns of these people who do not respect authority.

Jude

- 001:008 Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

Jude continues this thought by pointing out, as an example of good, how the angel Michael spoke of the devil

Jude

001:009 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

One final note on obeying and disobeying governments.

Rom

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Hebrews

012:014 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Another way to phrase this is we should live in peace and holiness with all men.

Citizenship Responsibilities - Protests, Riots and Looting

US Constitution

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution allows crowds to gather – peacefully – as listed below.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

So in the US, people have the right for peaceful assemblies/protests. Notice it does not protect or allow riots in which property is looted or destroyed, or abridge other people's rights.

But what does the bible say about protests? Are there any biblical principles concerning it?

Bible – Obey Government

Much of this was discussed earlier in the section entitled, "Citizenship Responsibilities – Obey Government". You are encouraged to re-read that section.

Notice God commands believers to obey government. God does not state that we should obey only certain types of government. Yes, the Bible says it is better to obey God than man. But So, long as government does not require people to disobey God's command, then government's laws are to be obeyed.

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

013:005 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

013:006 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

013:007 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

Since peaceful protests are allowed, then they are consistent with the above.

Some protests started when someone died while resisting arrest. That should not have happened. However, it is also true that the people being arrested should not have resisted. We are to obey government and those in power, and that includes the police.

Bible – Man's Anger Suppresses God's Plan

James

001:019 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

001:020 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

This principle can be seen in our lives. Back in the 1960's there were protests and riots over discrimination against African Americans in almost every area of life including access to schools, good jobs, housing and the like. Part of the cause of this racism was ignorance. In European American communities, the belief was if you have talent and work hard, you can achieve a good life style. They believed if you did not have a good life style, it was because you either lacked talent or were lazy. They viewed race protests as an attempt of African Americans to get something for which they were unwilling to work for. They thought protest leaders were communists. Those protests may have changed the minds of some politicians and some in Hollywood, but not of 'white' America. But then in the early 1970's, a TV comedy show came out which poked fun at the racist views of its lead character. That show caused 'white' American to listen and laugh at themselves, and their ignorance. It did not change things overnight. But it did cause a major shift in attitudes in a relatively short period of time. That TV show did far more to reduce racism in the US than all the other protests combined.

Another example of man's wrath causing problems is when protests are televised on TV. When some non-African Americans see African Americans protest and see some riot or loot, they ask themselves, "why would I want to live in an African American community". This may sound harsh. I am not saying this is a biblical teaching. But many people do not want to live where there can be protests, riots, and the like.

Bible – Overcome Evil With Good

God instructs us to live, as much as possible, peaceably with everyone. He also instructs us to overcome evil with good.

Romans

012:014 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

012:015 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

012:016 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

012:017 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

012:019 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

012:020 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in So, doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

012:021 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Matthew

007:012 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even So, to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Mathew

022:035 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

022:036 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

022:037 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

022:038 This is the first and great commandment.

022:039 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

022:040 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

No Justice No Peace?

This seems to be a popular phrase among protesters. However, it has no basis in biblical teaching. The bible teaches against this philosophy. I repeat once again

James

001:019 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

001:020 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

And

Romans

012:017 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Rioting And Vandalizing Is Theft

I think everyone has heard of the following.

Exodus

020:015 Thou shalt not steal.

No exceptions are listed. We are not to take what is not ours. That also means we are not to destroy or intentionally damage what is not ours. Period.

Bible – Who Is Responsible For Riot Damage

If you are protesting with a group, it is critical for you to know with whom you are protesting.

Ephesians

005:011 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

005:012 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

This is important enough to be repeated.

Ephesians

005:011 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

005:012 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

God also holds a community responsible for crimes such as murder.

Deuteronomy

021:001 If one be found slain in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him:

021:002 Then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain:

- 021:003 And it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke;
- 021:004 And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley:
- 021:005 And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for them the LORD thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the LORD; and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried:
- 021:006 And all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley:
- 021:007 And they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.
- 021:008 Be merciful, O LORD, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them.
- 021:009 So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD.

The point is, God holds a community responsible for upholding the law. It may sound like this is the responsibility of the police or the government.

But criminal elements, those who damage and steal property, are also the responsibility of the protesters too because they enable the rioters. This is because the rioters hide among the protesters. Police could more easily stop and/or arrest rioters if they were not hiding among the peaceful protesters. It is not good enough to say, "Someone else did the looting and vandalism".

In some cases, vandals invade a neighborhood after the protesters leave. The police stay with the protesters as they march to ensure safety, and ensure the protesters obey laws, do not block traffic and the like. No police are left behind when the looters arrive. This may be unwise on the part of the police. But massive protests can endanger the community because of their unpredictable nature.

Also see the section entitled, "Citizenship Responsibilities – Court", subsection called, "Testifying In Court" for more on this.

And it is not good enough for the government to say to those property owners, "Sorry we failed to stop the rioting. Collect from your insurance if you can." because they are responsible for keeping the peace.

One final note... A reporter embedded himself in with the 'peaceful' protesters Minneapolis. He talked with many to find out their thoughts. He reported that most, although they themselves were not violent, supported the violence, the looting, and destruction of property. Some excuses were 'those people are just taking back the wealth lost thru slavery' and 'violence brings attention to their cause'. When you stand or march with such people, are you not supporting their cause? Remember,

Ephesians

005:011 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

005:012 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

Proverbs

028:007 Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father.

Be Respectful Of Police and Others in Authority

This was covered in the section called "Citizenship Responsibilities - Being Respectful of Government". In short, we are to be respectful to all who are in authority. This means protesters should be respectful to police and those in authority. Protesters should not be confronting police, calling them names, and the like. It goes against what the bible teaches. Please read again the section entitled, "Citizenship Responsibilities - Being Respectful of Government".

Personal Observations - Violence When Being Arrested

These are personal observations, not biblical teachings...

I have lived a fairly long time. It seems like most adults over 50 have a personal, bad policeman story. It may be more common among African Americans. But all people seem to have had one sometime in their lives. That is not to say all police are bad. But everyone seems to have had a bad experience, including me.

I have known 2 white people who were taken into custody by police for making a sarcastic remark. But they were placed in squad cars without any incident. They obeyed police instructions and were not roughed up. They were later released without any charges because they did nothing illegal except to make some 'sarcastic' remarks.

It is good to remember that police will often resort to force when they are opposed and resisted. For example, at a protest in Buffalo NY in June 2020, a 75-year-old man approached a line of advancing police and was pushed to the ground by them. That was not racist. Rightly or wrongly, that was police reacting to someone who opposed their orders.

When I have seen violent arrests of African Americans on TV, and the video shows the confrontation from the beginning, these videos show the person resisting arrest. For example, in 2020 of George Floyd in Minneapolis died when the arresting police used excessive force *after he resisted being placed into a police vehicle claiming he was claustrophobic*. I doubt that anyone agrees with what the police did. But sadly, this started because he did resist. This seems to not have mattered to people because many massive protests and riots occurred with looting and burning of buildings.

This is part of the reason it is so important to obey police even when they are wrong. It is important to deescalate a bad situation. Police sometimes over react because that is what some police do. It is not necessarily due to racism.

No doubt part of the anger is because African Americans do not feel safe. But part of the anger of the protesters seems to be because their views on discrimination and slavery.

Citizenship Responsibilities – Pray for Justice

The bible teaches that we should not take revenge, but do good.

Romans

012:014 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

012:015 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

012:016 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

012:017 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

012:019 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

012:020 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

012:021 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

But this does not mean we should not seek justice. So, when there is injustice in the world or the town in which we live, we should pray that God deal with it according to His will, as He sees fit. God will decide if it needs to be dealt with. He will determine how to deal with it. And He will determine when to deal with it. But the bible also instructs us that we should pray and ask God to decide if it should be dealt with, and if so, please do so. Why do I say 'if it should be dealt with'? Because sometimes we ask incorrectly for things out of anger.

The following passage comes after when Jesus was speaking of the end of the Great Tribulation Period. Verse 8 makes this clear So, it sounds like these prayers are only for the Great Tribulation Period. But it is a great principle that is for any age. We are instructed to overcome evil with good. But we should also pray for justice when persecuted by governments or individuals.

Luke

018:001 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

018:002 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

018:003 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

018:004 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

018:005 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

018:006 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

018:007 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

018:008 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Remember to pray according to God's will.

1 John

005:014 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

005:015 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

The following verse expresses this a little differently. Notice it says, “supplication in the Spirit”. If we are born again, Jesus is ‘one’ with us. That is, we have a special union or communion with Him. And we can pray as we are led by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians

006:018 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Jude

001:020 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

John

016:023 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

016:024 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Notice the following passage which tells us when we pray for things we lust for, things not in God’s will but our own desires, we receive not.

James

004:001 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

004:002 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

004:003 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

I’d like to give an analogy. But remember, no analogy is perfect. At best, this one only gives a feel for the topic... Think of a family... A child asks a parent for a candy bar as a snack. The parent may say no. And there may be no candy bar in the house. But if the child asks for a snack without being specific, the parent may offer what is available and according to what the parent thinks is best for the child. And if the child does not ask at all, they get nothing. Prayer can be like that – sort of.

Matthew

005:044 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, blest them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Citizenship Responsibilities - Special Instructions for Christians Socializing with Christians Living in Open Sin

The Bible has general principles for living among non-Christians. It also has general principles for living among those who claim to be Christians but do not live according to the Bible's teachings.

2 Thessalonians

003:014 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

003:015 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

One reason for this is to emphasize that their behavior is wrong. Another is to avoid being corrupted themselves.

1 Corinthians

015:033 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

This idea extends to abstaining from TV, movies, and the like which promote bad lifestyles or beliefs.

The story of Lot is one example of how living in a Godless society can affect people. His story is discussed in the section entitled, "Issues – Schools". In summary, he chose to live in a wicked society. In the end, he had to flee his home. His home was destroyed. His wife, and probably his married daughters were killed. His unmarried daughter had incest with him. His moral judgement was very messed up.

Another story is the parable that Jesus told of the prodigal son. That story is discussed in the section entitled, "Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 2 – Christians". In summary, it was of a son who demanded his inheritance from his father and then left, squandering the money in a far off land. In the end, he returned to his father. There are 2 points to this story. One is that a Christian may get into a very sinful life. But he will repent and return to God. The other is he could lose his reward. But he will never stop being a child of God. There are several passages on this. The following is one which shows a true believer will never lose his salvation.

John

006:035 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

006:036 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

006:037 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

006:038 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

006:039 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

006:040 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

So this is another reason for avoiding people who live in open sin.

Citizenship Responsibilities – Taxes

In the gospel of Luke, Jesus makes it clear that people should pay the taxes which the government requires. He did not say people should pay taxes if they like how government is spending money.

Luke

020:022 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?

020:023 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

020:024 Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's.

020:025 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

Notice that Jesus did not say, 'pay only if you think it is fair' and He did not say, 'pay only if it is used for good programs'. He just said we should pay what government requires from us. He said this when Rome ruled the Mediterranean area. Rome was not highly moral government, and neither were its people. The point is that paying taxes is unconditional.

The following passage also speaks on the subject. The term 'tribute' means 'taxes'.

Romans

013:006 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

013:007 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

There is another issue on taxes. It concerns the fairness of them. Please see the section entitled Government Responsibilities – Taxes.

Citizenship Responsibilities - Being Respectful of Government

General Principle

It is common to see political cartoons poking fun at or mocking politicians and their views. Many comedians tell political jokes. And it seems almost all adults deride politicians. It seems almost second nature. But what does the bible say?

2 Peter

002:010 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

002:011 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

002:012 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

2 Peter

002:017 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

Remember - the Roman emperors at this time were pagan men who indulged in gross sins. Yet God instructs us to honor the rulers.

2 Peter

002:019 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

Exodus

022:028 Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

(Note – Some places in the bible the term 'gods' refer to judges because they act in the place of God.)

The point is, we should be respectful of those in authority.

And that is true regardless if they are Christians - rulers are to be respected.

Sinful Men/Women of God

Often, we hear criticism of people, especially of politicians, because they are not perfect, they have a flaw, or some annoying habit, etc. But we need to keep this in perspective. The questions are if they are trying to go God's will? Are they trying to implement godly policies?

Hebrews chapter 11 is called the heroes of faith chapter of the bible because it lists some of the men and women who were faithful to God. But when you examine that list, you notice that many of them had glaring flaws or committed some very bad sins. But they were great because they believed God and did great things thru faith and the leading of God. So, you see, God can and does use flawed people.

We need to remember that many great men of the bible were also badly flawed men of the bible. Let's look at some examples.

Abraham

The following passage records the story of how Abraham slept with his wife's maid and had a child by her. Some translations state that Hagar was a slave. This passage simply records history. It does not say God approved.

Genesis

- 016:001 Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.
- 016:002 And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.
- 016:003 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.
- 016:004 And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.
- 016:005 And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee.
- 016:006 But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thine hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

Lot

Lot was a nephew of Abraham. There is a separate section entitled "Behind the Veil – Story of Lot / Living in a Godless Society". Please see that section.

Moses – Killed a man. Could not speak well. May have had a bad marriage.

The following passage records the story of how Moses killed a man. This passage simply records history. It does not say God approved.

Exodus

- 002:011 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren.
- 002:012 And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.
- 002:013 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?
- 002:014 And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.
- 002:015 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

King David

2 Samuel chapter 11 tells the story how King David wanted the wife of Uriah, who was a soldier. So, he ordered Uriah to be placed in the first line in a battle. So, he might be killed. After Uriah died, King David married his widow. The following is what happened next.

2 Samuel

- 012:001 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

- 012:002 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:
- 012:003 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.
- 012:004 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.
- 012:005 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:
- 012:006 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.
- 012:007 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;
- 012:008 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.
- 012:009 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.
- 012:010 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.
- 012:011 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.
- 012:012 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.
- 012:013 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.
- 012:014 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

So, the prophet compared King David to a rich man who took the only lamb of a poor man. And David was punished for it.

Jonah

Jonah is the story of a prophet which God ordered to go to the Assyrian capital of Nineveh and preach to them, to believe in God and turn their back on sin. Jonah at first took a ship in the other direction because he hated the Assyrians and wanted to see God destroy them. He knew if they repented, God would forgive them. But Jonah wanted to see them destroyed and suffer eternal punishment/damnation. I am not listing the entire book of Jonah below. I am just including the last part of it.

Jonah

- 003:001 And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,
- 003:002 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.
- 003:003 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.
- 003:004 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.
- 003:005 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

- 003:006 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.
- 003:007 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:
- 003:008 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.
- 003:009 Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?
- 003:010 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.
- 004:001 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.
- 004:002 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.
- 004:003 Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.
- 004:004 Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?
- 004:005 So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.
- 004:006 And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So, Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.
- 004:007 But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.
- 004:008 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.
- 004:009 And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.
- 004:010 Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night:
- 004:011 And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more then sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

The point is, Jonah was a godly person and a great person because he believed, and in the end, obeyed God. But he hated Assyrians, at least in his early life. Today we might say he was a racist in his early life.

Rahab

The complete story of Rahab is in Joshua chapter 2. In short, before the Israelis attacked Jericho, they sent spies into the city. The prostitute Rahab protected and hid them in exchange for her life and the life of her family. The following is part of her testimony

Joshua

- 002:009 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.
- 002:010 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.
- 002:011 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

Notice that she believed in God. Also note that the Israelis left Egypt 40 years earlier and only she and maybe her family believed and turned to God. The following in Hebrews is a kind of epitaph.

Hebrews

011:031 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

The Apostle Paul

The Apostle Paul persecuted the Church before he was converted. After he was converted, he wrote many of the epistles and went on several missionary journeys spreading the Gospel.

Acts

008:001 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

008:002 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

008:003 As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

Acts

009:001 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

009:002 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

009:003 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

009:004 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

009:005 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

009:006 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

009:007 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

009:008 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

1 Corinthians

015:009 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

The Point

The point is, these are just an example of just some of the great people in the bible. Each was great for their faith in God and doing God's will. But each also had a flaw, often a very serious flaw. If we only seek people without flaws, we will only find 1 – Jesus Christ. Because He is the only one who is perfect.

Mark

010:017 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

010:018 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

2 Corinthians

005:020 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

005:021 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Hebrews

004:014 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

004:015 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

1 Peter

001:019 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

1 Peter

002:021 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

002:022 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

002:023 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

002:024 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 John

003:005 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

Citizenship Responsibilities - Relationship To Neighbors

Live in Peace

Government provides order among people. So, what are the principles by which people should live among each other?

Rom

013:008 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Rom

013:009 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

013:010 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Rom

013:013 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

013:014 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

The Bible teaches we should live in peace with all people as much as possible.

Rom

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Hebrews

012:014 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Another way to phrase this is we should live in peace and holiness with all men.

Give No Offence

The following Bible passage is a message from Jesus to His disciples instructing them how to react if someone fails to listen and accept their message.

Matthew

010:014 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

010:015 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

The following is what the Apostle Paul wrote about teaching non-believers.

1 Corinthians

010:032 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

010:033 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

2 Timothy

002:024 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

002:025 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

Notice that the Bible states we are not to be offensive. If people rejects God's message, leave them be. Preach, but do not push beliefs on others.

Help Each Other

There is also a teaching of Jesus which discusses how people should be towards each other. Please note that at the time He gave the story, the Samaritans were disliked by the Jewish people, while the priests and Levites were held in high regard. The point is, treat others as you would like them to treat you, even if you do not like them.

Luke

010:025 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

010:026 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

010:027 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

010:028 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

010:029 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

010:030 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

010:031 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

010:032 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

010:033 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

010:034 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

010:035 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

010:036 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

010:037 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Citizenship Responsibilities – Honor Thy Father and Mother

What is meant here?

Most nations have policies and laws to take care of elderly citizens. For example, many communities have special low-cost housing/apartments for seniors. The US gives a small pension called Social Security to most seniors. And there are community organizations or charities which help out in other ways. That is all fine and good. But God asks us to go a step farther and asks that we also help our parents.

You see this happening in other countries under the term 'extended family'. Some other countries, especially the poorer ones, have no 'safety net' for seniors. That is, the government provides little, if any, help to its seniors. Instead, the family is expected to help its seniors. The term 'extended family' is used because those groups are not limited to immediate family members. Instead, they can include grandchildren, cousins, in-laws and the like.

The basic principle is

Exodus

020:012 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

And it is repeated in the New Testament.

Ephesians

006:001 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

006:002 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

006:003 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

Jesus talked about this too when He admonished the Pharisees for not helping their parents.

Mark

007:009 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

007:010 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

007:011 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.

007:012 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

007:013 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

In the above passage, Jesus criticized people who did not help their parents. People were required to help their parents. But some adult children did not want to do this. In order to avoid giving money to their parents, they said they needed to give that money to the temple. They believed that by saying this, it eliminated their obligation to help their parents. Jesus condemned this idea.

But Jesus did not say the parents must live with their children when they are older. Actually, Jesus said or implied that it is good for young couples to live separately from their parents.

Matthew

019:004 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

019:005 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

I don't believe there is a one solution for every family trying to help parents. But children should help elderly parents.

Many people believe government is the solution for all of the problems of seniors. This is because once a senior cannot take care of themselves, they can apply to go into a retirement home, or if they need more care, into a nursing home. However, unless you are extremely wealthy, you will go into a nursing home where you are treated more like a commodity

than a human being. In some ways, you can feel like you are in a kennel. To keep costs down, there are usually 2 or 3 seniors per room separated by a curtain. You are lucky if the other people are friendly and can still talk, or if they are in vegetative state. Many are rude. Many are unable to hold a conversation. Care by the staff is minimal to keep costs down. Yes, they deliver food, help wash and dress you. But because the homes have limited staff, that is usually all they do. There is little time for friendly chit-chat. And often they see you like a commodity, not a human. The difference between a 1 star and a 5-star nursing home is usually in the quality of the care, the cleanliness of the nursing home, and the food. A 5-star home usually has more staff. So, they can respond faster when you hit the call button to go to the toilet. But they still usually have a rather cold atmosphere. Few really like living there. Sometimes it is the only option because a senior may need more care than can be provided by the family. Or a family will place a senior in a nursing home because they cannot afford home care.

But families should try caring for their elderly at home for as long as possible. If the day comes when it is no longer possible to provide adequate care at home, and they need to be placed in a home, the family ideally should make the stay at the home as pleasant as practical. This is something the government cannot do. Governments generally can only afford a small amount to keep seniors entertained and happy in a nursing home.

One thing that is often not known is that most states only pay for part of the cost of nursing home care of the poor. The rest of the money comes from the residents who still have money. The bills for the residents who can pay are inflated to cover the losses from the residents who cannot pay.

There are other ways that relatives can help the elderly. One way is to visit. Seniors often cannot go out and the really enjoy visits. Another way is simply to call them on the phone. Little gestures can really brighten up their lives.

Government Responsibilities – Maintain Law and Order

The Basics

The following passage instructs people to obey the government. But there is something more which is implied. It is this, that governments are to punish those who do evil. That is a responsibility of government. Yes, the bible says we are not to revenge ourselves. But in this passage, it states government is “a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil”. So, God had given government that role. What is also interesting is that this indicates government’s punishment is that of a revenger, not a corrector. Ie, government punishes criminals. I point this out because one of the criticisms of government is that it does a poor job of changing the behavior of criminals. Based on this passage, is that important?

Romans

13:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

013:005 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

Example of God Enforcing This Responsibility on Government

Now notice the following passage which states governments are responsible for punishing murder..

Numbers

035:031 **Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.**

035:032 And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest.

035:033 So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: **for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.**

035:034 Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel

First, notice verse 31. It says that no alternative punishment, like leveling a fine or payment to the family of the deceased, can be substituted for the death penalty in cases of murder. A murderer must be put to death.

Then notice verse 33 which says, “for blood defileth the land”. “The land” means the nation, or community. The point is, society, and government in particular, is responsible for maintaining justice in the land. When they fail to do this, that is a sin. And God will punish that sin. An example of this happening is below

2 Samuel

021:001 **Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.**

- 021:002 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.)
- 021:003 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the LORD?
- 021:004 And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you.
- 021:005 And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel,
- 021:006 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, whom the LORD did choose. And the king said, I will give them.
- 021:007 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the LORD's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.
- 021:008 But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholahite:
- 021:009 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the LORD: and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest.
- 021:010 And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.
- 021:011 And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.
- 021:012 And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabeshgilead, which had stolen them from the street of Bethshan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa:
- 021:013 And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.
- 021:014 And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. **And after that God was intreated for the land.**

We do not know all the details of what happened. The section of the bible speaking of King Saul's rule does not state this incident. God chose not to give us all the details. Did King Saul's family benefit from the killing of the Gibeonites? Did they encourage or help plan it? Were they in a position to prevent it but did nothing? We do not know. All we know is that something was wrong with Saul's family and their execution was acceptable to God for this sin. But this is an example where God acted according to the principles laid out in Numbers 35:31-34.

Government Responsibilities – Officials Should Take No Bribes, Be Kind

There are several passages which speak out against bribery. The following passage records what the prophet John the Baptist told people to do. In verse 11, he advises people to help the poor. Verse 13 was directed to the Publicans. Publicans were tax collectors who often demanded more than what the law required. The tax collector would then keep the excess. John told them they should not do this. Also during that period, some soldiers acted as police. In verse 14 John tells them to not be bullies, and to make no false accusations (ie, be truthful). I am not sure what the context was of his remark, “be content with your wages”. Perhaps it refers to bribes?

Luke

003:010 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

003:011 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

003:012 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

003:013 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

003:014 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

Actually, there are many passages against bribery. The following are a sample of some of them.

Exodus

023:008 And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.

In the following passage, judges are told not to take gifts. They are also told to ‘not respect persons’, meaning, do not regard a person’s social position, etc, when judging. All are to be judged equally.

Deuteronomy

016:018 Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

016:019 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

Proverbs

017:023 A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.

In the following passage, the prophet Isaiah condemns ‘princes’ for not taking up the cases of ‘the fatherless’ or widows. Even today, I have heard that there are places in the world where cases never come before judge until a bribe is paid (or only come before a judge after all cases where a bribe was paid were heard).

Isaiah

001:023 Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

001:024 Therefore saith the LORD, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

001:025 And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

001:026 And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

King Solomon wrote most of the book of Proverbs in the bible thru inspiration and leading of God. However, the last chapter contains advice from his mother by God's inspiration or prophecy.

Proverbs

031:001 The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.

031:002 What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?

031:003 Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.

031:004 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:

031:005 Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.

031:006 Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.

031:007 Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.

031:008 Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.

031:009 Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

Government Responsibilities – Equal Protection under the Law

Equal Protection

Much of this was covered under the previous section regarding bribes.

In the following passage, judges are told to ‘not respect persons’, meaning, do not regard a person’s social position, etc, when judging. All are to be judged equally.

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001:026 And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

No Respector of Persons

The following passages are more general. In them, we are told that God is no respecter of persons. Wealth does not matter. Social position does not matter. Race does not matter. He regards all the same.

Acts

010:034 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

010:035 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Romans

002:011 For there is no respect of persons with God.

Romans

010:012 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

010:013 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

1 Timothy

005:021 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

James

002:001 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

002:002 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

002:003 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

002:004 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

002:005 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

002:006 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

002:007 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

002:008 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

002:009 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

But what about 'sexual orientation'? God is no respecter of persons. But sin is sin, as James wrote

James

002:010 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

002:011 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

We are all sinners. And we all need to avoid sin.

Equal Protection for Christians

Who are Christians? Notice what the Bible says about them.

2 Corinthians

005:014 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

005:015 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

005:016 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

005:017 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Verse 17 is talking about being born again. As Jesus said,

John

003:003 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

So what if a person is a Christian? So, what if they are born again? Part of this answer is that a true Christian is in Christ and tries to follow Him.

John

010:025 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

010:026 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

010:027 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

Romans

008:004 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

008:005 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

Romans

008:008 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

008:009 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if So, be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

008:010 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

008:011 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

008:012 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

008:013 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

008:014 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

You see, true Christians will want to live a life pleasing to God. Christians have a dual nature. They have the Spirit of God and a desire for what God wants. But they also have a sinful, selfish nature. This should not be too surprising since people have a spirit/soul and body.

Problems arise when courts or governments tell Christians they must do something that is contrary to what they perceive as God's will. Non-Christian judges are not led by God's Spirit. As a result, they sometimes make wrong decisions.

For example, if a Christian feels it is wrong to perform services for a gay wedding because it affirms something sinful, who is going to protect the Christian? If a Christian child feels it is wrong to appear naked before a transgender student of the opposite sex, who is going to protect the Christian? Will a non-born again Christian judge? Where is the protection for the Christians?

Gays say they were born that way. But Christians were reborn that way.

Government Responsibilities - Enforce Laws, Protect People

I never thought it would be necessary to add a section like this to this study/write-up because it seemed so obvious. However, events in 2020 made me realize that some government bodies do not protect people as they should. There have been riots and looting and police in some locations did little to stop it and government attorneys did little to prosecute laws. But these things are wrong.

God commands governments are to enforce laws. God does not state that we should obey only certain types of government. Yes, the Bible says it is better to obey God than man. But so, long as government does not require people to disobey God's command, then government's laws are to be obeyed.

Notice the following passage, especially verse 4 which states the duty of government. Notice that the passage uses terms like 'sword' and 'revenger' and 'wrath' implying harsh punishment when appropriate.

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Notice the following passage, especially verse 14 which states that governments have God's authority to punish criminals. That is stated as a duty of government – not a privilege.

1 Peter

002:013 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

002:014 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

002:015 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

002:016 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

002:017 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

This same exhortation is repeated in the following passage.

Jeremiah

022:001 Thus saith the LORD; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word,

022:002 And say, Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates:

022:003 Thus saith the LORD; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.

And again...

Zechariah

007:009 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

007:010 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

And again...

Proverbs

018:005 It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

Isaiah

010:001 Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;

010:002 To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!

The bible also issues a warning of what happens when government fails to execute justice on a timely basis. And you see it happening in the riots of 2020 when governments failed to act against the rioters.

Ecclesiastes

008:011 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

One reason why some governmental bodies fail to act against criminals is mentioned in the following passage.

Proverbs

028:005 Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things.

Government Responsibilities - Capital Punishment Part 1 – Old Testament

There has been debate if capital punishment is right. Many people site the following Bible passage from the 1611 King James translation of the Bible as a reason to be against capital punishment. This is one of the 10 Commandments given by God thru Moses.

Exodus

020:013 Thou shalt not kill.

But this is not the best translation of the passage. More recent translations such as the NIV translate it as 'murder' – not 'kill'. The passage is meant as a commandment to individual people. But is this view correct? To answer that, one must look at other Bible passages talking about killing and capital punishment. The following are some passages addressing this topic.

According to the Bible, after the great flood, God gave the following to Noah.

Genesis

009:001 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

009:002 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

009:003 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

009:004 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

009:005 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

009:006 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man.

God also instructed the nation of Israel that people were responsible for themselves – not others.

Deuteronomy

024:016 The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

And during the Wilderness time, God commanded those who committed premeditated murder should be put to death. But those who kill without planning should not.

Exodus

021:012 He that smiteth a man, So, that he die, shall be surely put to death.

021:013 And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee.

021:014 But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die.

God also commanded those who make slaves of others should be put to death.

Exodus

021:016 And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

Deut

024:007 If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die; and thou shalt put evil away from among you.

God also commanded that those who harm others make resitution. The following is one example.

Exodus

021:018 And if men strive together, and one smite another with a stone, or with his fist, and he die not, but keepeth his bed:

021:019 If he rise again, and walk abroad upon his staff, then shall he that smote him be quit: only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall cause him to be thoroughly healed.

Another example is as follows.

Exodus

021:033 And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein;

021:034 The owner of the pit shall make it good, and give money unto the owner of them; and the dead beast shall be his.

The point is, people must make restitution.

Some claim that there is no bible verse condemning abortion. But notice the following passage

Exodus

021:022 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, So, that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine.

021:023 And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,

021:024 Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

021:025 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Newer translations like the NIV (which I recommend but do not quote for copy write reasons) make the passage much more clear. Verse 22 speaks of someone injuring a pregnant women So, she has a premature child. 'No mischief' means 'no serious injury' to the woman or the child. If that happens, then the offender must pay for the injury. However, 'if any mischief follow', meaning a death occurs, then the offender should give up their life. Some claim this is referring to an injury to the mother. But if that were true, why would there be this passage since injury and death to a person is covered in other passages? That is why many/most conservatives say this passage is referring to the injury or death of the fetus/infant.

The above passage also indicates the punishment should be equal to the crime.

There are cases even today where pets or other animals kill others. There has been controversy what the punishment should be for the owners. The following Bible passage is what God prescribed.

Exodus

021:028 If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit.

021:029 But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death.

The question sometime is, can a person defend themselves. The following Bible passage speaks to that point.

Exodus

022:002 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.

022:003 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

Another interesting passage is from the book of Leviticus. It reads

Leviticus

020:001 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

020:002 Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones.

Molech was a pagan idol. The idol would be heated by fire and infants would be placed in its arms where they would be burned alive. God declares in the above passage that any who would do this would be stoned to death. That is, the community would gather stones and throw them at the perpetrator until he died. There are other passages which also declare stoning as a punishment. The point here is, certain types of “cruel” punishments are allowed by God even if they are not allowed by the US constitution.

Now notice the following passage which goes farther than the previous ones.

Numbers

035:031 **Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.**

035:032 And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest.

035:033 So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: **for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.**

035:034 Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel

First, notice verse 31. It says that no alternative punishment, like leveling a fine or payment to the family of the deceased, can be substituted for the death penalty in cases of murder. A murderer must be put to death.

Then notice verse 33 which says, “for blood defileth the land”. The point is, society, and government in particular, is responsible for maintaining justice in the land. When they fail to do this, that is a sin. And God will punish that sin. And example of this happening is below

2 Samuel

021:001 **Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.**

- 021:002 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.)
- 021:003 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the LORD?
- 021:004 And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you.
- 021:005 And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel,
- 021:006 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, whom the LORD did choose. And the king said, I will give them.
- 021:007 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the LORD's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.
- 021:008 But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholahite:
- 021:009 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the LORD: and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest.
- 021:010 And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.
- 021:011 And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.
- 021:012 And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabeshgilead, which had stolen them from the street of Bethshan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa:
- 021:013 And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.
- 021:014 And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. **And after that God was intreated for the land.**

We do not know all the details of what happened. The section of the bible speaking of King Saul's rule does not state this incident. God chose not to give us all the details. Did King Saul's family benefit from the killing of the Gibeonites? Did they encourage or help plan it? Were they in a position to prevent it but did nothing? We do not know. All we know is that something was wrong with Saul's family and their execution was acceptable to God for this sin. But this is an example where God acted according to the principles laid out in Numbers 35:31-34.

What is also interesting is that there are no exceptions to the death penalty in the bible. For example, the following are reasons why a person may not be executed in the US but are not exceptions in the bible.

The person's intellect or IQ is low

The person is young

The person is considered insane

Execution would be painful (cruel or unusual). Note that one form of execution was stoning.

Many believe that murderers are not responsible if **one of the above applies**. But notice what Jesus said

Matthew

015:019 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

And in another passage

Jeremiah

017:009 **The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?**

Remember that a person is a spirit with a soul living in a body. So, when the bible says 'heart', it is referring to the spirit. So, sin is a heart (or spirit) problem too. When we are born, we have a conscience about right and wrong. And yes, if people go on sinning, they can lose any guilty feeling they have toward it.

1 Timothy

004:001 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

004:002 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

Government Responsibilities – Capital Punishment Part 2 – New Testament

On Aug 2, 2018 the Pope issued an opinion on capital punishment without any biblical reference backing up his position. He said capital punishment was against the Gospel but there were no biblical references. More specifically he said, “One has to strongly affirm that condemnation to the death penalty is an inhuman measure that humiliates personal dignity, in whatever form it is carried out. And is, of itself, contrary to the Gospel, because it is freely decided to suppress a human life that is always sacred in the eyes of the Creator, and of which, in the final analysis, God alone is the true judge and guarantor.” Yet these statements are contradicted by the bible and the statement ‘contrary to the Gospel’ is just wrong.

There are numerous Old Testament passages where God instituted the death penalty. But what is written about it in the New Testament? Some passages are as follows.

Jesus said the following.

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

013:005 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

013:006 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

013:007 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

Although this passage does not specifically mention the death penalty, it seems to be implied in verses 3 and 4. What is also interesting is that the term ‘revenger’ is used rather than ‘reformer’ or ‘teacher’.

Another interesting passage is

Acts

012:023 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

So, per the Pope, was the angel of the Lord wrong for executing him? If all life is sacred, they why does God take life?

Acts

025:010 Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

025:011 For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.

Notice that the Apostle Paul did not condemn the death penalty. He only appealed to be tried by Caesar.

Notice the following passage regarding Jesus trial before Pilate.

John

019:010 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

019:011 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Notice that Pilate said he had the power to crucify Jesus and Jesus replied saying that power was given to him from above (ie, God). So, Pilate's authority to execute criminals came from God. Also, notice that Jesus did not outlaw it when He was here on earth. Also notice, this passage contradicts the Pope's statement that, "God alone is the true judge and guarantor" in that Jesus said Pilate received the authority from above and this is consistent with the above teaching in Romans 13.

The Pope did not provide biblical support for the statement, "No man ever, not even the murderer, loses his personal dignity, because God is a Father who always awaits the return of the son who, knowing that he has done wrong, asks pardon and begins a new life." More specifically, where in the bible does it speak of personal dignity never being lost? Note the following passages.

Jude

001:012 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

001:013 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

The above passage describes false teachers. Does it sound like they have 'personal dignity' per the bible?

Ephesians

005:011 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

005:012 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

The point is, if it a shame even to speak of some things, then it is not a shame to practice them, and a loss of dignity? Yes, God wants people to repent. But God does call people home.

1 Corinthians

011:030 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

And God gave authority to governments to execute criminals.

There are some other passages which sound like they may be about capital punishment.

Revelation

013:010 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

But this passage is in regards to the Great Tribulation period. I believe it is saying that Christians must not resist authority.

Another passage is

Matthew

026:052 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

But is this an endorsement of capital punishment, or a prophecy of what would happen, or a warning about 'you reap what you sow'?

John

008:003 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

008:004 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

008:005 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

008:006 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

008:007 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

008:008 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

008:009 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

008:010 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

008:011 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

In the above passage, Jesus stopped an execution by pricking the conscience of the accusers. What was Jesus writing on the ground? May be the names of her lovers? The men standing there ready to stone her? When these men left, there were no more accusers, no more witnesses. Since the Mosaic Law requires at least 2 witnesses for an execution, she could not be legally executed. This story has as much to do with equal treatment under the law as anything else.

Remember, Jesus did not speak out directly against the death penalty. He did not repeal the Mosaic Law stating murderers should be executed. Jesus did say,

Matthew

005:017 **Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.**

005:018 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Some people oppose the death penalty in the hope the murderer will repent in prison and therefore be saved. But then why did God approve the death penalty?

Some oppose the death penalty because it is not applied evenly across social groups. Others oppose the death penalty because innocent people sometimes have been found guilty of murder. Yes, those ills need to be corrected.

In summary, God instituted capital punishment and gave governments the power/authority to use it. It is not a tool to correct. And God never cancelled government's authority to use it.

Yes, innocent people have been wrongly put to death. That means better rules need to be in place when capital punishment is used. For example, some states have laws stating that a person can only be given the death sentence if there is no doubt whatsoever that the accused committed the murder. This is a different standard from the usual standard that someone is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

We Are The Government?

Some people believe because the US is a republic (some incorrectly call the US a democracy), "we" are the government. Therefore, biblical directives towards people should be true for government as well. Since the bible says people should not kill, then it follows, in their minds, that governments should not execute murderers. And because Jesus instructed people to forgive and because we should forgive '70 times 7', 'we' as a government should only give light sentences if any. In short, they believe governments should forgive criminals and give light sentences because the bible tells individuals they should forgive.

But notice the following verses.

Romans

013:001 **Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.**

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

013:005 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

013:006 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

013:007 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

The above passage makes it clear governments are ordained by God. It is God's will that there be governments.

Now notice the following passages

Daniel

002:021 And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

Daniel

002:037 Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

002:038 And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

Daniel

004:017 This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

Point is, God ordains governments and selects its leaders. Yes, God may allow people to chose the form of government they want, but it is God's will that there are governments.

And what is their purpose? One of them is in the following passage

1 Timothy

002:001 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

002:002 For kings, and for all that are in authority; **that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.**

Another passage relating to this is

1 Peter

002:013 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

002:014 **Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers,** and for the praise of them that do well.

And again in

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 **For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.**

So, though we as individuals are to forgive, governments are responsible for establishing law and order, a tranquil place to live, and to punish 'evildoers'. This is not accomplished by forgiving offenders and not prescribing punishment to stop bad behavior and protecting the general public.

Perhaps the one time in history where people lived the freeist was in Israel during the time of the judges. (See the book of Judges in the bible.) There was no formal government, no king, no legislature. However, God did set up judges to rule. And the people were to follow the Mosaic Law which included the death penalty for certain crimes. So, although people could forgive, they were also to fulfill the law and its punishments. And in that day, the death sentence was often carried out by the community stoning the guilty party. We do not have to carry out death penalties this same way. But the point is, the individuals had responsibilities in the Mosaic Laws too.

Deuteronomy

017:002 If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant,

017:003 And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded;

017:004 And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel:

017:005 Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die.

017:006 At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

017:007 **The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So, thou shalt put the evil away from among you.**

Government Responsibilities – Man Slaughter - Accidental

Sometimes people accidentally kill another person. They had no malice or hatred towards that person. The death was not intentional. So, what kind of punishment, does the bible prescribe for the killer?

3500 years ago, God told the nation of Israel to designate several cities as 'cities of refuge' where a person who accidentally killed another could stay without fear of retribution. The passage is below.

Numbers

035:006 And among the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites there shall be six cities for refuge, which ye shall appoint for the manslayer, that he may flee thither: and to them ye shall add forty and two cities.

035:007 So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be forty and eight cities: them shall ye give with their suburbs.

035:008 And the cities which ye shall give shall be of the possession of the children of Israel: from them that have many ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few: every one shall give of his cities unto the Levites according to his inheritance which he inheriteth.

035:009 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

035:010 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan;

035:011 Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares.

035:012 And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment.

035:013 And of these cities which ye shall give six cities shall ye have for refuge.

035:014 Ye shall give three cities on this side Jordan, and three cities shall ye give in the land of Canaan, which shall be cities of refuge.

035:015 These six cities shall be a refuge, both for the children of Israel, and for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them: that every one that killeth any person unawares may flee thither.

035:016 And if he smite him with an instrument of iron, So, that he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

035:017 And if he smite him with throwing a stone, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

035:018 Or if he smite him with an hand weapon of wood, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

035:019 The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer: when he meeteth him, he shall slay him.

035:020 But if he thrust him of hatred, or hurl at him by laying of wait, that he die;

035:021 Or in enmity smite him with his hand, that he die: he that smote him shall surely be put to death; for he is a murderer: the revenger of blood shall slay the murderer, when he meeteth him.

035:022 But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity, or have cast upon him any thing without laying of wait,

035:023 Or with any stone, wherewith a man may die, seeing him not, and cast it upon him, that he die, and was not his enemy, neither sought his harm:

035:024 Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgments:

035:025 And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall abide in it unto the death of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil.

035:026 But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled;

- 035:027 And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; he shall not be guilty of blood:
- 035:028 Because he should have remained in the city of his refuge until the death of the high priest: but after the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession.
- 035:029 So these things shall be for a statute of judgment unto you throughout your generations in all your dwellings.
- 035:030 Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die.
- 035:031 Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.
- 035:032 And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest.
- 035:033 So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.
- 035:034 Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel

So, what does this mean for us today? It shows us that the punishment for accidental death is not the same as intentional murder.

Government Responsibilities – Timely Justice

The book of Ecclesiastes is a humanistic view of life apart from God and should be read that way. There are important lessons that are in this book. One teaches that justice delayed causes contempt for the law.

Ecclesiastes

008:011 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

Government Responsibilities – Taxes

One question that is often debated is whether taxes are fair. Are the poor paying too much? Are the rich paying too little? I have not seen much in the bible on this. However, there are some passages that lay down general principles about kindness and charity.

The following passage is part of a section talking about how poor could not get justice. It is a terrible thing when the poor are taken advantage of.

Amos

005:011 Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them.

The NIV translation is helpful here. In it, it uses the word 'tax' rather than the word 'burden'.

So how does this relate to taxes? I believe one question people need to ask is whether a tax policy is taking advantage of the poor. I believe one needs to search their heart and God for this answer.

The next passage gives reasons why God destroyed the city of Sodom. Notice one of the reasons was their lack of caring about the poor and needy. How does this relate to taxes? I believe it is a question of whether government considers what the poor need.

Ezekiel

016:049 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

016:050 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.

The following passage is taken from the book of Nehemiah in the bible. Nehemiah was the prophet who was in charge of the rebuilding of the Jerusalem walls.

Nehemiah

005:001 And there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews.

005:002 For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, are many: therefore we take up corn for them, that we may eat, and live.

005:003 Some also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth.

005:004 There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards.

005:005 Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already: neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards.

005:006 And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words.

005:007 Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them.

005:008 And I said unto them, We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer.

- 005:009 Also I said, It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?
- 005:010 I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray you, let us leave off this usury.
- 005:011 Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them.
- 005:012 Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; So, will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise.
- 005:013 Also I shook my lap, and said, So, God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the LORD. And the people did according to this promise.
- 005:014 Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that is, twelve years, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor.
- 005:015 But the former governors that had been before me were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bare rule over the people: but So, did not I, because of the fear of God.
- 005:016 Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall, neither bought we any land: and all my servants were gathered thither unto the work.
- 005:017 Moreover there were at my table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, beside those that came unto us from among the heathen that are about us.
- 005:018 Now that which was prepared for me daily was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine: yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people.
- 005:019 Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.

There is a lot in the above passage. But the key verse I want to point out is #18. Nehemiah could have been reimbursed for his expenses. But he did not because the burden of taxes and circumstances are already very heavy on the people. If he were reimbursed, it would have burdened them even more. He did not want that. Nehemiah can be an example for government. It is not good to over burden people.

So what is a fair tax?

Government Responsibilities - Religious Tolerance – Toward Non-Christians

The Bible teaches that Christians are to teach God's word. If people accept it, great. If not, they are to be left alone. God will deal with them later.

The following Bible passage is a message from Jesus to His disciples instructing them how to react if someone fails to listen and accept their message.

Matthew

010:014 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

010:015 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

The following is what the Apostle Paul wrote about teaching non-believers.

1 Corinthians

010:032 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

010:033 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

The name Ephraim is a kind of nickname for Israel.

Hosea

004:017 Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.

The following parable of Jesus teaches that the tares (those who reject God) will be left alone in this life. The point is that both good and evil people will live together and that in the end, God judges all.

Matthew

013:024 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

013:025 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

013:026 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

013:027 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

013:028 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

013:029 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

013:030 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

The meaning of the parable is as follows.

Matthew

013:036 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

013:037 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

013:038 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

013:039 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

013:040 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; So, shall it be in the end of this world.

013:041 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

013:042 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

013:043 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

The following are instructions for Christians.

2 Timothy

002:024 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

002:025 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

2 Thessalonians

003:014 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

003:015 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

The Bible teaches we should live in peace with all people as much as possible.

Rom

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Hebrews

012:014 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

Another way to phrase this is, live in peace and holiness with all people.

James

001:020 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

God does punish countries when they fall into idolatry even if there are a few who are still faithful to Him. The following is an example.

2 Chron

028:006 For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers.

However, God only asks Christians to spread His word. Yes, things were different in the Old Testament times. For example the following is what King Asa did. It is a historical record.

2 Chron

015:001 And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:

015:002 And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

015:003 Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.

015:004 But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.

015:005 And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries.

015:006 And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity.

015:007 Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.

015:008 And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD, that was before the porch of the LORD.

015:009 And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.

015:010 So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.

015:011 And they offered unto the LORD the same time, of the spoil which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep.

015:012 And they entered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul;

015:013 That whosoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman.

015:014 And they swore unto the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets.

015:015 And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about.

015:016 And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron.

015:017 But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.

015:018 And he brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels.

015:019 And there was no more war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.

2 Chron

017:001 And Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Israel.

017:002 And he placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken.

017:003 And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim;

017:004 But sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.

017:005 Therefore the LORD stablished the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance.

017:006 And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.

017:007 Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, even to Benhail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah.

017:008 And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tobadonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests.

017:009 And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

017:010 And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, So, that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

Once again, violence against pagan peoples is wrong. But notice the blessings to the country when it followed God.

Government Responsibilities – Religious Tolerance - Toward True Christians

No Peace, Hatred of Christians

Sadly, we see persecution of Christians around the world and this persecution takes on many forms. In some countries, it is a death sentence to convert to Christianity. In some places, Christians can be imprisoned or executed if someone claims they insulted Mohammed. In others, Christians are not allowed to lead a public life according to biblical principles.

But Christians must expect this because the bible warns them this will happen.

2 Timothy

003:012 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Luke

006:022 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

006:023 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

Matthew

005:010 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

005:011 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

005:012 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for So, persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

1 John

003:013 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

John

015:018 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

015:019 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

015:020 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

015:021

But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

015:022 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

015:023 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

015:024 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

015:025 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

John

016:002 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

The following passage is part of a prayer by Jesus.

John

017:014 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Romans

008:005 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

008:006 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

008:007 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Don't Conform to the World

Much of the hatred is because the bible teaches we are not to be conformed to the world.

Romans

012:001 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

012:002 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

When Jesus was here, He warned that this could/would lead to conflicts and persecution. When He said, "I came not to send peace", I believe He was saying that God was not conforming to rebellious mankind, and that mankind would rebel against Him, and Christians would be persecuted.

Matthew

010:034 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

010:035 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

010:036 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

010:037 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

010:038 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

010:039 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Luke

012:051 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division

012:052 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

012:053 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

012:054 And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and So, it is.

012:055 And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

012:056 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?

012:057 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

012:058 When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

012:059 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

The following is a prophecy by Jesus regarding a time closer to the end times.

Mark

013:010 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

013:011 But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

013:012 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

013:013 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Do Not Persecute Christians

In the following bible verses, God commands that people and countries should do no harm to His people. This passage was from the time of King David. But principles of verses 21 and 22 apply to true Christians today, regardless of what ethnic group they are from. No harm means no harm, and 'touch not' means 'touch not'. It is a declaration that Christians must be allowed to live according to God's will, unhindered. Forcing Christians to do something that they believe is sinful is wrong.

1 Chronicles

016:014 He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

016:015 Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;

016:016 Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac;

016:017 And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant,

016:018 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance;

016:019 When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it.

016:020 And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people;

016:021 He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes,

016:022 Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

The bible passage continues with following verses. Governments should not interfere with the missionary work of them.

1 Chronicles

016:023 Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation.

016:024 Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

The Bible says a day will come during the Great Tribulation period where God will punish the world for its persecution of God's children.

Revelations

016:004 And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

016:005 And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

016:006 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

016:007 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

There is another passage warning of this in Revelations.

The following passage is a prophecy of the God's judgment and destruction of "commercial Babylon". This passage speaks of its fornication. In this passage, when it speaks of fornication, it is speaking of living apart from God. Chapter 18 verse 24 and chapter 19 verse 2 summarizes its great sin.

In the Bible, God often compares His relationship with humankind with that of man and an unfaithful wife. That is a reason why it uses words like 'fornication' and 'whore'.

The following passages speak of this great commercial center, living apart from God, persecuting God's saints (or people), which is to be judged and destroyed by God.

Revelations

018:001 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

018:002 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

018:003 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

018:004 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

018:005 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

018:006 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

018:007 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, So, much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

018:008 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

018:009 And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning,

018:010 Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

018:011 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

- 018:012 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,
- 018:013 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.
- 018:014 And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.
- 018:015 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,
- 018:016 And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!
- 018:017 For in one hour So, great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,
- 018:018 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!
- 018:019 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.
- 018:020 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.
- 018:021 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.
- 018:022 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;
- 018:023 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.
- 018:024 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

Revelations

- 019:001 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:
- 019:002 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.
- 019:003 And again they said, Alleluia And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

What is also interesting is that all the kingdoms of the world traded with commercial Babylon and mourned when it was destroyed. It seems they did not care Babylon persecuted Christians. It seems they did not have trade sanctions against it. But this should not be too surprising. Even today, there are governments which persecute Christians and the US imposes no trade sanctions against them and, in some cases, even provides foreign aid to them. But is this right?

After the US Supreme Court ruled gays can marry, one Kentucky clerk refused issuing marriage licenses until her name was removed from the license. A court refused even though there is a federal law requiring reasonable accommodation for religious reasons. Not only are some courts/governments limiting freedom of religion guaranteed under the First Amendment, but they are also ignoring federal laws requiring reasonable accommodations for religious reasons.

I have seen news reports where a local or national government has stopped people from passing out Bibles or have stopped people from teaching Christianity. Some might be local governments which stop Bible classes in public housing

in the US. One was a news report of the US army which confiscated and burned bibles soldiers in Afghanistan had (the soldiers planned to distribute them). What does the Bible teach about this?

The Apostle Paul encountered similar problems. Notice the following passage from the Bible. The Bible says in verse 15 that these people do not please God. Verse 16 warns of the wrath of God for this. Verse 18 states that Satan hindered Paul. If Satan hindered Paul, he can be behind other attempts to hinder the preaching of God's word.

1 Thessalonians

002:014 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

002:015 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

002:016 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

002:017 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

002:018 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

Citizenship Responsibilities - How Christians Should React To Governments Who Persecute or Kill Them

There are many reports of Christians being persecuted or executed by governments – especially in Muslim countries. Sometimes it is because Christians worship in homes rather than officially sanctioned churches. Sometimes it is because Christians talk about the Bible to Muslims. And Muslims in these countries sometimes attack and kill Christians because they are Christians. So, what should a Christian's response be?

The church in Smyrna suffered similar problems during the Roman Empire period. God gave them a special message in the book of Revelation in the Bible. It is as follows.

Revelations

002:008 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

002:009 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

002:010 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

002:011 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Notice in this passage, that it is the devil who is behind these attacks. The 10 days refer to 10 periods under Roman emperors when the persecution would be at its worse.

Also notice, that the Bible does NOT say Christians should avenge themselves. Jesus said just the opposite.

Luke

006:027 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

006:028 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

Matthew

005:043 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

005:044 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

005:045 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

005:046 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

005:047 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

005:048 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

And the Bible also says

Romans

012:019 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

012:020 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in So, doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

012:021 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Leviticus

019:018 Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

God does say that Christians who suffer, even to the point of death, will get a victor's crown.

Jesus gave the following instruction to His disciples. I am not sure this is applicable all the time today.

Matthew

010:023 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

The following can apply to how to deal with cruel police and politicians.

Deuteronomy

032:035 To me belongeth vengeance and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

032:036 For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.

The passage in Matthew is something Jesus said.

Matthew

005:044 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Romans

012:017 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

012:019 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

012:020 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in So, doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

012:021 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Hebrews

012:014 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

The NIV translation uses the phrase, "Make every effort to live in peace".

Deuteronomy

032:035 "It is Mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them"

032:036 The Lord will judge his people and have compassion on his servants when he sees their strength is gone and no one is left, slave or free.

Matthew

005:044 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Romans

012:017 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.

012:018 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

012:019 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

012:020 On the contrary" If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

012:021 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Is it right for the US to give money to governments which persecute Christians – regardless of the reason for giving the money?

One final note. It is sometimes tempting to argue points with godless people. This can be especially true when it comes to politics. However, Christians are instructed to teach, and not to strive with people. Don't argue with the unsaved.

2 Timothy

002:024 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

002:025 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

Government Responsibilities - National Defense

The message in the following verse is that nations which have departed from God should not trust that men or weapons will keep them safe.

Jeremiah

017:005 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

Jeremiah

017:007 Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.

Government Responsibilities - Treaties

Treaties and Alliances

Another interesting story is from 2 Chronicles. Here, evil king Ahab of Israel (the northern 10 tribes) convinces king Jehoshaphat of Judah (the southern 2 tribes) to help him in battle at Ramothgilead.

2 Chronicles

018:001 Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab.

018:002 And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramothgilead.

A prophet warns them not to go to battle.

2 Chronicles

018:016 Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace.

But they go any way. King Ahab is killed. King Jehoshaphat escapes. Then a prophet came to King Jehoshaphat. Notice God's message to the king regarding treaties and alliances!

2 Chronicles

019:001 And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.

019:002 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

King Jehoshaphat learned the lesson and did not repeat it as implied in the following story

1 Kings

022:049 Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not.

Is it right for the US to be helping countries which persecute Christians based on 2 Chronicles 19 verse 2? King Jehoshaphat made a treaty for convenience. But was it right in God's sight?

Sin of Unholy Alliance – circa 941 BC

At this time, the Jewish nation was split in 2. The northern kingdom was called Israel and the southern kingdom was called Judah. At this time, the northern kingdom was in idolatry while the southern kingdom worshiped God. The king of Judah was Asa and he was good. In the past, God helped Asa and Judah in battle. But in this story, king Asa made a treaty with Syria (which was pagan/evil) when Israel attacked Judah.

2 Chronicles

016:001 In the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

016:002 Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Benhadad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

016:003 There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

016:004 And Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abelmaim, and all the store cities of Naphtali.

Because Asa trusted in the evil nation of Syria rather than God, God declared punishment on Judah.

2 Chronicles

016:007 And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

016:008 Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand.

016:009 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

Breaking of Treaties

The following story shows how seriously God regards treaties, even when they are made because one side deceived the other. When Israel was coming into the land God promised them, they were instructed by God to destroy all the inhabitants. In the following story, the Gibeonites, fearful of the advancing Israelites, sent ambassadors to the Israelites. They deceived the Israelites by pretending they were from a far off land – not the land God promised the Israelites. Joshua made the mistake of not asking God if they should make a treaty. When the Israelites discovered they were tricked, they still observed the treaty. This was in about 1451BC. But there is more to the story later...

Joshua

009:003 And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai,

009:004 They did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up;

009:005 And old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy.

009:006 And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us.

009:007 And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us; and how shall we make a league with you?

009:008 And they said unto Joshua, We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye?

009:009 And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt,

009:010 And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth.

009:011 Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants: therefore now make ye a league with us.

009:012 This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy:

- 009:013 And these bottles of wine, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey.
- 009:014 And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD.
- 009:015 And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them.
- 009:016 And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were their neighbours, and that they dwelt among them.
- 009:017 And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjathjearim.
- 009:018 And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes.
- 009:019 But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them.
- 009:020 This we will do to them; we will even let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them.
- 009:021 And the princes said unto them, Let them live; but let them be hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation; as the princes had promised them.
- 009:022 And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us?
- 009:023 Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.
- 009:024 And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing.
- 009:025 And now, behold, we are in thine hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.
- 009:026 And So, did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not.

The following is another example how seriously God views treaties.

Judges

- 002:001 And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.
- 002:002 And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?
- 002:003 Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.

There are not many references to the Gibeonites. They were part of the Amorites. There is a reference that during the time of Samuel, around 1130BC, there was peace between them and Israel

1 Samuel

- 007:014 And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

But around 1021BC, 430 years after the treaty was made, there was a famine in Israel. This was during King David's reign – about 30 years after King Saul died. Notice the reason why God gave for the famine.

2 Samuel

021:001 Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD.
And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.

021:002 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.)

Notice that King David felt they had to make an atonement to the Gibeonites for this

2 Samuel

021:003 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the LORD?

There are important lessons in this for us today. Notice that

God told the Israelis to make no treaties with the inhabitants of the land, which included the Gibeonites. The Israelis were beguiled by the Gibeonites, in part, because they did not ask God about the proposed treaty. Hundreds of years after the treaty was made, God punished Israel because King Saul broke the treaty.

Treaties Without Regard To God's Will

Treaties should be made in accordance with God's will. This may be difficult with today's secular leaders. But it is a principle taught in the bible. Notice the following judgement of God after a treaty was made with Egypt without seeking God's will first.

Isaiah

030:001 Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:

030:002 That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

030:003 Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.

030:004 For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes.

030:005 They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

030:006 The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people that shall not profit them.

030:007 For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still.

030:008 Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever:

030:009 That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD:

030:010 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits:

030:011 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

030:012 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:

030:013 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.

But how can a government make treaties consistent with God's will unless those leaders are born again Christians? And how likely will a country have born again Christian leaders if the population is not?

Government Responsibilities – Israeli Treaties

The previous section, “Government Responsibilities – Treaties”, discussed how important it is to not break treaties even when they are hundreds of years old. A later section, “Issues – Nation of Israel”, discusses God’s promise of land for their nation. There were several warnings and commands that went along with it. One is

Deuteronomy

007:001 When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

007:002 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

007:003 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

007:004 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: So, will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

007:005 But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.

007:006 For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

007:007 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:

007:008 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

In the above passage God instructed them not to make any covenant/treaty with these people. God promised this land which includes Palestine to the Israelis forever, So, long as they remained faithful (truly believe and desire Him). If they turn their back on God, He said He would ‘temporarily’ remove them from the land. How can the Israelis make a treaty with other nations if it requires them to give up some of their land? Is it right to pressure the Israelis to give up territory?

Government Responsibilities – Spending, Supporting Anti-God Institutions

In the gospel of Luke, Jesus makes it clear that people should pay the taxes which the government requires. He did not say people should pay taxes if they like how government is spending money.

Luke

020:022 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?

020:023 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

020:024 Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's.

020:025 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

Notice Jesus said we should pay taxes. He did not say, only pay taxes if we agree with how it is spent. Also note that Rome spent money on evil things. That was not an excuse to refuse paying taxes.

However, if people have a choice how government spends money, what kinds of projects should Christians vote for? What kinds of projects should they favor and what kinds of projects should they object to (ie, vote against)?

The following passage does not talk expressly about governments. But it states a principle that Christians should follow when deciding on government spending.

2 John

001:007 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

001:008 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

001:009 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

001:010 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

001:011 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

A little background to help understand this passage. Back in the first century, preachers would travel and stay in people's home rather than an inn. Some of these preachers were true to the teachings of Jesus. But some preachers denied the divinity or humanity of Jesus. They taught what was untrue and were leading people away from a saving faith in God. In the above passage, John is telling people to have nothing to do with these people and not to support their needs by letting them stay with you. To do so, would mean you are supporting their evil deeds – ie, you are helping drive people from a saving faith. In verse 8, John says this is important so, we do not lose our reward in heaven.

So how does this apply to government spending? There are some projects or institutions which deny the divinity or humanity of Jesus. For example, there are some countries and governments where people receive the death penalty if they convert to Christianity. Is it right for a Christian to support foreign aid to such governments? There are public

schools systems which teach a morality that is contrary to the Bible. Is it right for Christians to support public school systems which teach children things which are anti-Christian – especially when government does not provide money for Christian schools? I leave it as a question.

The following message was given to king Jehoshaphat after the king gave support to an evil nation.

2 Chronicles

019:001 And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.

019:002 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

People have different opinions about supporting different programs like welfare and the military.

But when a program or institution actively denys the Jesus or persecutes Christians, should Christians support funding for it? How does the principle of 2 John apply in these cases?

Government Responsibilities - Governments Should Obey God

The Bible teaches that governments should serve God. The following passage is a commandment and warning to governments – especially verses 10 and 11.

Psalms

002:007 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

002:008 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

002:009 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

002:010 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

002:011 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

002:012 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

The point is, all rulers including kings and judges are to obey God. Ruler cannot hide behind public opinion or human law which is contrary to God. God states bluntly in this passage that they are to serve Him. And by 'serving' God, it means obeying Him.

Now consider the words of the Lord's Prayer. When people asked Jesus how they should pray, Jesus gave them this prayer.

Matthew

006:009 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

006:010 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

006:011 Give us this day our daily bread.

006:012 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

006:013 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Luke

011:001 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

011:002 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, So, in earth.

011:003 Give us day by day our daily bread.

011:004 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

So how can a government be in compliance with this prayer unless it is faithful to God and His teachings?

The following is an example of disobeying this principle. Saul was the first king of Israel. But he did not obey the instructions of God given to him by the prophet Samuel. So, finally, Samuel gave the following message to King Saul.

1 Samuel

015:022 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

015:023 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

Saul remained king for about another 20 years or so. But after his death, the kingship did not go to any of his children. Instead it passed to David, whom God selected.

The Bible also teaches that God holds government leaders responsible for morality and that God will punish them for leading their people into sin.

The following is an example of this

1 Kings

013:033 After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places.

013:034 And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.

In this case, God punished king Jeroboam because he led the country Israel into idol worship. Going back farther in time, God caused the Jewish nation to be split into 2, the northern section was called Israel and the southern section was called Judah. God selected Jeroboam as king of Israel. Jeroboam was worried that his people would want to rejoin with Judah because Jerusalem and the temple was in Judah. So, Jeroboam instituted idol worship in Israel, drawing his people away from the one true god. He continued in sin many years even though he was warned about it. The above passage was from the end of his reign.

The following is another example

1 Kings

015:033 In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years.

015:034 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

016:001 Then the word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying,

016:002 Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins;

016:003 Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

In the above example, God declared judgment against King Baasha for leading the people of Israel in sin. His punishment was for his household to die off. (Jeroboam was a former king who was evil. As punishment, all of his heirs died too.)

The following is another example of God judging a king for leading the nation of Israel in sin.

1 Kings

021:020 And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD.

021:021 Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel,

021:022 And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin.

Ahab was the most evil king that Israel ever had. Elijah was God's prophet at that time. As in the previous example, God declared judgment on Ahab, in part, for making Israel to sin. In this case, the main sin was worshiping other gods.

So what does all this mean for us today? It should be a warning to today's political leaders, that if you fail to stand up for God's ways, not only might God punish the nation, but God may punish the leaders in a very personal way. It may not be as dramatic as ending their posterity. But they may be punished. For example, they may be removed from office. It is not good enough to hide behind some philosophy or political principle. We are responsible to God and He holds us personally accountable. God does punish.

Government Responsibilities – Do Not Consult Mediums

Warning About Mediums

There have been US presidents or their families (such as the wives of Presidents Lincoln and Reagan) who consulted mediums or psychics. The bible condemns these practices and has warnings against this. One of the most telling is the story of King Saul who disobeyed God by consulting the witch of Endor (1 Samuel chapter 8). The following passage summarizes his demise.

1 Chronicles

010:013 So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;
010:014 And enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

What is the power behind the mediums and psychics? The following passage gives insight.

Acts

016:016 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:
016:017 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.
016:018 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.
016:019 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,

The implication is that these spirits are demons or devils because God condemns mediums and this is not the way God leads people.

Ephesians

006:012 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

2 Corinthians

011:014 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.
011:015 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

And such people are lost souls, without the light of God in them

Revelation 21:8

021:008 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Galations 5:20-21

005:020 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

005:021 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Isaiah 8:19-20

008:019 And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

008:020 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

But the bible teaches we should be lead by God's Spirit. Teaching on this topic could fill an entire book and is beyond the scope of this write up. The following are some sample passages.

John

010:025 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

010:026 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

010:027 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

Psalms

143:010 Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.

Romans

008:013 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

008:014 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

008:015 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

008:016 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Listen to God

Proverbs

003:005 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

003:006 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

003:007 Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

Isaiah

055:006 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

055:007 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

055:008 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

055:009 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So, are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Only 1 God

Many of these mediums and psychic declare that people are gods, just like Jesus. However, the bible declares

Isaiah

043:010 Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

043:011 I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.

Jeremiah

032:038 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God:

Notice these passages declare there is only 1 god. The passage in Jeremiah declares that God will be the god of the Jewish people (this is part of a future prophecy) – not that the Jewish people will be gods unto themselves.

Now notice the Jesus declares He and the Father are one.

John

010:030 I and my Father are one.

The Witch at Endor

There has been controversy about whether someone can talk with the dead. Those who believe in such things sometimes bring up the biblical story of how King Saul sought out the witch at Endor and thru her was able to speak to the dead prophet Samuel. The story is below.

1 Samuel

028:003 Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

028:004 And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa.

028:005 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

- 028:006 And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.
- 028:007 Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.
- 028:008 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.
- 028:009 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?
- 028:010 And Saul sware to her by the LORD, saying, As the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.
- 028:011 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.
- 028:012 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.
- 028:013 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth.
- 028:014 And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.
- 028:015 And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.
- 028:016 Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?
- 028:017 And the LORD hath done to him, as he spake by me: for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David:
- 028:018 Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day.
- 028:019 Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.
- 028:020 Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

So did Saul talk with the prophet Samuel? Notice that verse 6 says that none of the prophets came to Saul when he enquired of God. So, why would Samuel respond when Saul spoke to a witch? Also, notice in verse 13, the witch claims to see 'gods' (ie, devils or demons) ascend from the earth. This is a clue as to what she really may have seen. In verse 14, the witch does not say she saw Samuel, but that Saul believed/perceived it to be Samuel. Finally, the message that was given to Saul was nothing new.

But what did Jesus teach about people coming back from the dead? Yes, He raised some from the dead. But notice the following parable which He gave.

Luke

016:019 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

016:020 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

016:021 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

016:022 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

016:023 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

016:024 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

016:025 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

016:026 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: So, that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

016:027 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

016:028 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

016:029 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

016:030 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

016:031 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Notice in verses 30-31, the rich man's request that someone from the dead warn his brothers was denied. The point is, living are not allowed to communicate with the dead.

Government Responsibilities – Are Rulers Gods?

This may seem like a strange topic. In a sense, governments are like gods because they act on God's stead to maintain order in society. This is even reflected in the following passage.

Psalm

082:001 God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

082:002 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

082:003 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

082:004 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

082:005 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

082:006 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

082:007 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

082:008 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

The implication is not that people are gods. What is really meant, when one looks at the entire passage, is that governments act in the place of God to maintain order and judge the law offenders. The following passage expands on this point.

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

013:005 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

013:006 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

013:007 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

But there is another reason for writing on this topic.

In the past, there have been rulers who claimed they were gods. The most famous were the emperors of ancient Rome. Another, more recent example, were the emperors of Japan. However, the bible declares there is only one God.

Deuteronomy

004:035 Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him.

Isaiah

043:010 Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

043:011 I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.

Isaiah

044:006 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

Jeremiah

032:038 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God:

Notice these passages declare there is only 1 god. There are other passages which say the same thing too. The passage in Jeremiah declares that God will be the god of the Jewish people (this is part of a future prophecy) – not that the Jewish people will be gods unto themselves.

Some people falsely believe they can become gods. However, the bible does not teach this. The bible teaches that we may become ‘children of God’ – but not gods.

John

001:012 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

001:013 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

There is a warning in the bible for any who claim to be a god.

Isaiah

042:008 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Galatians

001:006 I marvel that ye are So, soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

001:007 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

001:008 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

001:009 As we said before, So, say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

So why even include this topic? It is because there were rulers who claimed to be a god in the past. And it will probably occur again in the future. This was written as a warning.

Government Responsibilities – Courts, Judges And Rulers

The following passages refer to judges. However, some can apply to rulers (presidents, congressmen, senators, etc) because they make the laws. Taking payment to pervert fairness can have the same effect as a judge taking a bribe for a ruling.

Duty of judges

Judges are to be unbiased, and are not to take bribes.

Deuteronomy

016:018 Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

016:019 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

Leviticus

019:015 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.

Proverbs

024:023 These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.

024:024 He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:

024:025 But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.

Requirement for multiple witnesses

Deuteronomy

017:006 At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

Deuteronomy

019:015 One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

Obviously, there are many types of evidence that can be presented in a case. The point is, there is no case if the only evidence is the statement of one person.

God's Judgment

In that day, if the court could not decide, the case was brought before God. I am not sure how this applies today. I suspect that if a true Christian, as a juror, has a bad feeling about a judgment, that may be the wrong judgment.

Deuteronomy

017:008 If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the LORD thy God shall choose;

017:009 And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment:

Punishment of false witnesses

Deuteronomy

019:016 If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong;

019:017 Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days;

019:018 And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother;

019:019 Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: So, shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

The most important point is that false witnesses should be punished.

Degree of Punishment

Courts no longer follow the idea of 'eye for eye, tooth for tooth' as stated in the following passage. But one principle in the passage is that the punishment should be equal to the crime. Also, notice that there is little thought for the pain of the punishment.

Deuteronomy

025:001 If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

025:002 And it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certain number.

025:003 Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed: lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee.

Deuteronomy

019:021 And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

What is interesting about the following passage is that in that day, all the people of the community were required to participate in the execution. I wonder why...

Deuteronomy

017:007 The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So, thou shalt put the evil away from among you.

Bribes and Favoritism

Deuteronomy

016:018 Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

016:019 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

The following is a warning against bribes.

Proverbs

015:027 He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

In the following Bible passage, God warns judges to “Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.” and He reminds them that He judges the judges. In this passage the term ‘gods’ refers the judges because when a person sits in judgment of others, they are taking the place of (or acting for) God.

Psalms

082:001 God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

082:002 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

082:003 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

082:004 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

082:005 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

082:006 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

082:007 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

082:008 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations

Legal Games

Proverbs

022:022 Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate:

022:023 For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

The newer NIV translation uses the term “do not exploit the poor” instead of “Rob not the poor”, although the New Kings James version still uses the term “rob”. I cannot read ancient languages So, I rely on translations. I suspect the term “rob” is correct. But I believe the term “exploit” gives a good feel for the verse. The basic idea of the passage is we should not take advantage of the poor. The term “gate” refers to courts. Back when the passage was written, the courts were at gates of the cities. This passage has some relevance to the topic “living wage”. But it also has relevance to courts and games played by attorneys. This second topic is what is discussed here.

There are many examples of how courts have oppressed the poor. Some examples are

1. An innocent person is charged with a crime. If they have money, they can bankrupt themselves trying to prove their innocence. They may win their case but lose everything they have. Or, if they do not have enough money to defend themselves, they end up in prison because public defenders do not have the resources to defend them adequately.
2. I know of a case where false charges were made by the federal government against a small business owner. When the federal government attorneys realized that their case was falling apart, rather than drop the case, they had the case moved to the Washington DC district before the trial started. The small business owner could not afford to defend himself So, far away. So, he had to settle out of court even though he was innocent.

Sadly, many in the legal profession are more interested in playing a legal game and winning at all costs. They don't care about the truth. They only care about winning. Things like these should not occur and the bible condemns it.

Government Responsibilities – Selecting Federal Judges

The US Senate selects federal judges and Supreme Court justices. Many Christians would like only true Christians to be selected to those positions, and that their Christian beliefs be part of their judicial philosophy. Other people object saying religion should have no part of judicial philosophy and no part of government.

What The Bible Teaches

This topic was covered in the section entitled, “Overview – Governments Are To Serve God”.

What The US Constitution Says

When looking at this, it is important to see what the US Constitution says/allows. There are only 2 passages in it which mention religion. The first is in Article 6, the last paragraph. It reads,

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; **but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.**

That is to say, no law can be passed requiring a person be of a certain religion. This does not bar Senators from voting based on religious beliefs.

The second passage is the First Amendment. It reads,

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

This passage prohibits the government making laws regarding religion, its practice, or restrictions.

No where are senators prohibited from voting their religious beliefs. No where does it say church and state are separate. It only says government cannot pass any laws regarding religion.

What Is Judicial Philosophy?

A complete write up is beyond the scope of this book. But let's look at certain aspects, certain examples.

Example 1

Does a judge believe capital punishment is lawful? And if so, based on what?

Many judges believe capital punishment is wrong for various reasons. What do they base it on? It comes down to personal beliefs. They may try justifying it some way by calling it barbaric. Or by saying it depends on a person's age, mental state, and intelligence. But it still comes down to personal belief that they do not want to see a criminal die. This is a kind of secular morality. This is a kind of secular 'religion' (see the section entitled “Issues – What Is Religion?” for an explanation) because the broader definition of 'religion' does not require a god. A philosophy or moral code can be called a religion.

The topic of capital punishment is covered in the sections “Issues – Capital Punishment Part 1 – Old Testament” and “Issues – Capital Punishment Part 2 – New Testament”. In brief, the bible teaches capital punishment is appropriate for

deliberate murder and there are no exceptions for age, mental state, or intelligence. So, this teaching is part of a moral code. It does not decide who goes to heaven or hell. It is based on God's word but does not require a belief in God to accept it. It is simply a biblical teaching. So, there is nothing inconsistent with it being part of a judge's judicial philosophy.

To summarize, is capital punishment a cruel or unusual punishment that is banned by 8th Amendment? My point is, people who are selected as judges have their own moral code based on something. This will affect how they rule because there are So, many grey areas in the constitution, where things are not spelled out. What is that moral code? Are they Evangelical Christians whose moral code is spelled out in the bible? Do they subscribe to modern morality which can change over time? Are their morals based on the far Left's philosophy that nothing is morally wrong if it does not affect someone else? Or are their morals based on...? This is an example why it is important to chose Evangelical Christians as judges. It does not violate the constitution and it maintains Christian values in the country.

Example 2

Does a judge believe abortion is OK? And if so, based on what? A belief a woman has a right to do anything they want with their bodies? Even in terms of late term abortions or partial birth abortions? It largely comes down to when a person believes life begins.

The bible teaches life begins at conception (see the section entitled, "Issues – Abortion"). Once again, this teaching is part of a moral code. It does not decide who goes to heaven or hell. It is based on God's word but does not require a belief in God to accept it. It is simply a biblical teaching. So, there is nothing inconsistent with it being part of a judge's judicial philosophy.

Humanists, secularists, progressives would like people to believe that secular morality is not a form of religion and is the only view that is acceptable for judges. But as mentioned, biblical morality is not Christianity per se. Christianity is developing a 'saving' relationship with God. So, biblical morality is not in conflict with the Constitution.

Example 3

How does a judge interpret the First and Fifteenth Amendments? If the government passes a law saying a business cannot discriminate against a customer based on their sexual identity or orientation, does that trump the First Amendment?

Progressive/secular/humanist judges may say 'yes' based on the Fifteenth Amendment, which reads in part,

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; **nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.**

A Christian judge may say this does not trump the First Amendment, especially since the 15th Amendment speaks of laws, not anything in the Constitution.

This is another example of judicial philosophy and why it is important to have judges which stand up to biblical principles, including the protection of Christians from persecution.

More Examples

More examples could be provided. But these are listed to show how a person's religious beliefs could affect their judicial philosophy.

Selecting Local and State Judges

In some cities and states, people vote to decide who will be judges. The principles mentioned above also apply for these elections. Unfortunately, people rarely get to know the candidates well enough to know if they are Christians and if their Christian beliefs are part of their judicial philosophy.

Government Responsibilities – Suicide Watch In Prisons

One may want to read the NIV translation of the following verse because the KJV translation can be confusing. The term ‘violence to the blood’ refers to murder and ‘flee to the pit’ refers to the grave. The idea is that if a person tries to commit suicide because they murdered someone and have a guilty conscience, then let them.

Proverbs

028:017 A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.

Government Responsibilities – Bribes & Campaign Contributions

I do not know of any Bible passage that speaks directly to campaign contributions. This is probably because the nation of Israel was never a democracy during the biblical period.

However, campaign contributions, especially from generous donors, often influence how a politician will vote. In that sense, they are bribes because contributions, especially large ones, are often made with the intent of influencing votes.

The following Bible passages were listed earlier and are repeated here because they are relevant. They are both a warning and a judgment.

Deuteronomy

016:018 Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

016:019 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

The following is a warning against bribes.

Proverbs

015:027 He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

In the following Bible passage, God warns judges to “Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.” and He reminds them that He judges the judges. In this passage the term ‘gods’ refers the judges because when a person sits in judgment of others, they are taking the place of (or acting for) God.

Psalms

082:001 God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

082:002 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

082:003 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

082:004 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

082:005 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

082:006 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

082:007 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

082:008 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations

Isaiah

001:021 How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

001:022 Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

001:023 **Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.**

Amos

005:011 Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them.

005:012 For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.

Government Responsibilities - Choose Good, Wise Counselors, Listen to Righteous People

When given the chance, Christians should choose leaders that God would select. And what kind of leaders would God select? A passage from first Samuel addresses this.

1 Samuel

016:007 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

So should not Christians likewise choose born again Christians as leaders? After all, the bible declares

Psalms

002:010 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

002:011 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

And will a godless leader obey this commandment?

The following passages advise rulers on how to choose counselors. Note that when the Bible speaks of wicked men, it is referring to people with wicked hearts, hearts that are far from God.

Proverbs

024:006 For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety.

Proverbs

025:004 Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

025:005 Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

Some groups criticize and pressure politicians to ignore Bible Believers' views and pressure politicians not to associate with Bible Believers. The following Bible passage speaks to that point.

Proverbs

018:005 It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

Government Responsibilities – Do Not Lie

The Bible gives laws to be obeyed by everyone, including political leaders. So, although some passages are not specific to political leaders, it is implied because they are meant for all people. So, why mention it here? Because political leaders have recently been caught telling flat out lies to the public.

Proverbs

017:007 Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince.

Proverbs

006:016 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:

006:017 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

006:018 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

006:019 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Proverbs

012:022 Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight.

Zechariah

008:014 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the LORD of hosts, and I repented not:

008:015 So again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not.

008:016 These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:

008:017 And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD

James

005:012 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

Government Responsibilities – Be Merciful

Proverbs

020:028 Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.

Government Responsibilities – Pay Promised Pension/Wages/Bills

As of this writing, the US federal government and governments of some states are considering reducing the pensions promised to its employees. This is more than simply reducing pensions for future employees. And it is more than reducing pensions for future work (while leaving pension already earned as-is). The discussion is to reduce the pensions employees have earned throughout their careers, including reducing the pensions of people already retired.

From a humanistic point of view, this is like pulling the carpet from the feet of the employees. These people based their financial decisions in life based on the promises of the pensions they'd receive. Then when they are close to retirement, the rules are changed and their plans are all awry.

But what does the bible say about such things? Before listing relevant bible passages, it is important to remember that pensions are a type of compensation. The difference between wages and pensions is that a pension is a type of delayed payment for work done. So, what does the bible say about failing to pay for work done?

Leviticus

019:013 Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.

Deuteronomy

024:014 Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates:

024:015 At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.

Proverbs

003:027 Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.

003:028 Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and tomorrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.

Jeremiah

022:013 Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work;

Malachi

003:005 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.

Romans

004:004 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

1 Timothy

005:018 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

James

005:004 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

The point is, employers should pay all that is promised and without delay.

Government Responsibilities - Advice for Leaders – Short Summary Of Key Points

Actually, this is advice for everyone. But recent events made me think about leaders when reading these passages. Many passages could be added. But this is listed because of recent events.

The following passage is a short list of what God considers abominations. Notice that there are politicians which have violated each.

Proverbs

006:016 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:

006:017 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

006:018 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

006:019 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

The following is specific commandment of God that rulers and judges are to serve Him. They cannot hide behind man-made laws or constitutions and say they are independent of God and therefore ignore Him or rule apart of His will.

Psalms

002:007 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

002:008 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

002:009 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

002:010 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

002:011 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Some politicians have become offensive in their speech. The following are warnings to them.

Proverbs

015:001 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

Galatians

006:007 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

The following 2 verses seem to go together. The point is, trust and follow the Lord.

Proverbs

016:002 All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

Proverbs

016:025 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

The following warns not to take bribes.

Deuteronomy

016:018 Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

016:019 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

Issues – Other

It has been over 10 years since I first started compiling bible verses which address various political issues. It seems like a never ending endeavor because new issues keep coming up. At some point, I must end this because the issues seem endless. But I want to point out that for most political issues, bible verses can be searched out for guidance. The same pattern that was completed here can be applied to future issues.

This write-up is not intended as a series of laws to follow.

For example, there is no biblical instruction on torture. But what guiding principles can be applied? What about saying the Pledge of Allegence? Think about it. A pledge is a type of promise or oath. Allegiance is loyalty, being true and faithful. But with ever changing morality in a country, should a Christian pledge allegiance to a country? What if that country acts contrary to God's laws? These are things everyone needs to consider for themselves.

Issues - Doctrine of Discovery / Discovery Doctrine

The Doctrine of Discovery is the idea that was OK for European nations to settle lands that were unoccupied. This included lands that were unoccupied by “civilized” or “Christian” people. This doctrine originated, or was based on, papal edicts in the 1400’s and 1500’s authorizing some European nations to conquer and occupy such lands.

There is only 1 similar command in the bible and it was given by God to the Hebrews who exited Egypt and were to conquer Palestine, taking the land for their own. They were to expel or execute peoples who long before turned their backs on God and worshiped idols, and practiced abominations. But there is no such edict in the bible today for us.

So, what are the biblical teachings related to this, if any?

The Land Belongs To God – We Are Only Tenants

This was covered in the section entitled

Overview - The Land Belongs to God - We Are Only Tenants

In summary, God owns the world and everything in it. We are only tenants. And God will evict tenants who turn their backs on Him. The bible gives numerous examples of this. It does not mean God will have a good nation evict a bad one. Sometimes God has used nations even more evil to evict another. Also, it does not mean God has to send a disaster on a nation. Sometimes God simply withholds His protection.

God Punishes And Evicts Evil Peoples/Nations

This was covered in the section entitled

Overview - National Blessings For Obeying God And Curses For Not

God promises blessings to nations/peoples who follow Him and do His will. But God has also warned us multiple times in the bible that He will punish nations that turn their backs on Him, and those which commit serious sin. There are many examples of this in the bible which are included in chapters called “Judgement Example –”.

How does this apply to more recent history? Some say the Americas were stolen from the Native Americans. It should be pointed out that they were heathen. This does not justify a Christian to attack them. Remember, Jesus told his disciples the following,

Matthew

010:012 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

010:013 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

010:014 **And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.**

010:015 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

010:016 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: **be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.**

It should be remembered that many Native Americans were “hunter/gatherers”, meaning they wandered on the land and did not have permanent settlements.

Treaties

This was covered in the section entitled

Government Responsibilities – Treaties

In summary, governments are to honor treaties, even bad ones.

Israel's Conquest of Canaan

The conquest of Canaan by Israel is an example of God's views and treatment of people. Please note that what God ordained then is not a command or permission for us today.

The story starts with God's promise to Abraham that He would make a great nation from his descendants. And it includes giving the land to them for as long as they remained faithful to Him. Notice also verse 16 in which God tells Abraham that the "iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" and that is why He delayed the termination of their tenancy.

Genesis

015:008 And he said, LORD God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

015:009 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

015:010 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

015:011 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

015:012 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

015:013 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; **and they shall afflict them four hundred years;**

015:014 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

015:015 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

015:016 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: **for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.**

So, what is this land that was promised to Abram and his descendants?

Joshua

001:003 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

001:004 **From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.**

Notice in the following passage that God was not simply going to empty the land before the Israelis entered it. Instead, they were to take the land. Notice that they were to offer peace terms to the Canaanites. If they refused the terms, the Israelis were to eliminate execute the men and enslave the women and children. Why? Because of their rebellious heart against God. And because if they remained, "That they teach you not to do after all their abominations" (verse 18). That is why God wanted them eliminated. Because like a cancer, they would lead the Israelis against God.

Deuteronomy

- 020:009 And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people.
- 020:010 **When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.**
- 020:011 **And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee.**
- 020:012 **And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it:**
- 020:013 **And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword:**
- 020:014 **But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.**
- 020:015 Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.
- 020:016 But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth:
- 020:017 But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee:
- 020:018 **That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; So, should ye sin against the LORD your God.**
- 020:019 When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege:
- 020:020 Only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it be subdued

Verses 44-46 discusses who could be permanently enslaved (kept permanently as an indentured servant).

Leviticus

- 025:044 Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.
- 025:045 Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession.
- 025:046 And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: **but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.**

How does this relate to us today? Remember, God does not always use good people to destroy a nation. The following passages in Isaiah chapter 10 are some of the most revealing in the Bible how God punishes nations. Here, God declares He is using the nation of Assyria to punish Israel for their sin. Then after He uses Assyria to do this, He punished Assyria for its sins. Notice that God compares Assyria to a rod which God wheels. Also note that the Assyrians were no better than Israel. Yet God used them to punish Israel.

Isaiah

- 010:005 **O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.**
- 010:006 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

Native Americans

Much of what was done to Native Americans was against biblical teaching. For example, the bible condemns the breaking of treaties. So, did God evict them? It seems consistent with biblical teaching.

Papacy Circa 1500

To get a better understanding of the Papacy during this period, the reader may want to watch the movie “Luther” starring Joseph Fiennes and Sir Peter Ustinov. This movie centers around the problems and conflicts in and around the Papacy at this time. It is fairly well balanced.

Ever since shortly after Jesus’s ascension, heresies were challenging biblical teachings. As time passed, few had the opportunity to read the bible, including those in the ministry. Popes began to exert more and more authority over national issues. Over time, the popes tried to dictate policy to kings. And popes sometimes threatened to excommunicate the entire population of a country if its king failed to follow the pope’s dictates. So, it is not surprising that a Doctrine of Discovery came about from papal edicts.

Also, during this time, there were wars between Catholics and Protestants, with the Catholics wanting to eliminate the heresies of Protestantism (in their opinion). Often, the wars ended with the agreement that the people would practice and be taught the religion of the ruler. This led to many Protestants wanting to leave Europe for the New World, for freedom of religion and its practice.

Sadly, there are few books about wars of religion that occurred in the 1500’s and 1600’s. Some titles on this are

The French Religious Wars 1562–1598

The Thirty Years’ War 1618–1648

Both are from Osprey Publishing.

Issues - Foreign Relations - The Hammer Becomes The Victim – Danger Of Afflicting Israel

The countries of Israel and Judah fell away from God several times. God then removed His protection from them and let others attack or afflict them. These countries were generally more evil than Israel and Judah. And God brought judgment against them, in part, for their treatment of the Jewish people.

One example of this is in Isaiah. Notice that in this first set of verses, God declares He will take vengeance against Babylon.

Isaiah

047:001 Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.

047:002 Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.

047:003 Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.

A little later, God gives one reason why He would take vengeance against Babylon.

Isaiah

047:006 I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.

A little later, it is stated the Babylonians trusted in their wickedness and were proud. But God declares they will be brought down and they will not be able to stop it.

Isaiah

047:010 For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.

047:011 Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.

And God says it counsels, etc, will not be able to find a way out of it.

Isaiah

047:012 Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if So, be thou shalt be able to profit, if So, be thou mayest prevail.

047:013 Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee.

047:014 Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.

047:015 Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, even thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee.

A promise

Isaiah

054:017 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.

There are also warnings in the Bible for harming Israel. The following is a promise God made with Abram (later called Abraham).

Genesis

012:001 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

012:002 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

012:003 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

A few hundred years later, when the nation of Israel was about to move into the land of Palestine, pagan King Balak tried hiring the prophet Balaam to curse Israel. So, he could defeat them. But although Balaam wanted the commission, he could not speak against Israel. The following is part of what the prophet said about Israel.

Numbers

024:009 He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.

God has used nations to punish Israel. Then these nations were also been judged by God.

The section entitled "Prophecy of Future Judgment" contains additional warnings to nations who oppose Israel – especially in the prophecy of Zechariah. One key prophecy is listed below.

Zechariah

012:009 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Issues – Do Not Plunder Other Nations

No commentary needed here.

Habakkuk

002:002 And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

002:003 For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

002:004 Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

002:005 Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:

002:006 Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!

002:007 Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them?

002:008 Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

002:009 Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil!

002:010 Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul.

002:011 For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

002:012 Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!

002:013 Behold, is it not of the LORD of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?

002:014 For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

There is another teaching in the bible that is similar to this. 2 Samuel chapter 11 tells the story how King David wanted the wife of Uriah, who was a soldier. So, he ordered Uriah to be placed in the first line in a battle. So, he might be killed. After Uriah died, King David married his widow. The following is what happened next.

2 Samuel

012:001 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

012:002 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

012:003 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

012:004 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

012:005 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:

012:006 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

- 012:007 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;
- 012:008 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.
- 012:009 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.
- 012:010 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.
- 012:011 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.
- 012:012 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.
- 012:013 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.
- 012:014 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

So, the prophet compared King David to a rich man who took the only lamb of a poor man. And David was punished for it. I can't help but think this is similar to a powerful, wealthy country taking away some of the territory or wealth of a poor neighboring country. As of this writing, one can see this occasionally happening in the world today. What the prophet said to King David could apply to those countries today. The principle in Habakkuk is the same.

Issues - Eating Meat

There are some who say people should not eat meat and want laws passed giving animals rights like those of people. But the Bible teaches something different.

1 Timothy

004:001 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

004:002 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

004:003 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

004:004 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

004:005 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

Genesis

009:001 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

009:002 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

009:003 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

009:004 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

Genesis

009:003 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

Issues - Freedom To Do What You Want

Here is another interesting Bible passage. Notice that the people turned away from God were doing what they pleased. Therefore God said He would cast them out of the land.

Jeremiah

016:010 And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?

016:011 Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law;

016:012 And ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me:

016:013 Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not shew you favour.

There are 2 interesting verses in the book of Judges. One is chapter 17 verse 6. The other is chapter 21 verse 25 – the last verse in the book. When something is in the Bible once, it is important. When it is in the Bible twice, it is extra important. The verses are below. Note that the book of Judges tells the stories how the nation of Israel fell into sin, were punished by God, and then God raised up a “judge” to deliver them. This was repeated over and over. The following 2 verses summarize the nation of Israel in this period. So, what does this say about freedom and the ‘pursuit of happiness’?

Judges

017:006 In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Judges

021:025 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Issues - Social Security & Saving For Retirement

The following Bible passage lays down a principle for saving. In this parable, Jesus tells a story about a rich man who saves until he can 'eat, drink, and be merry' (verse 19). Jesus does not say the rich man was retiring. But it sounds like he could have. The parable is...

Luke

012:015 And He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

012:016 And He spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

012:017 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

012:018 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

012:019 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

012:020 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

012:021 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

So the man saved until he could relax. And what did Jesus say was the result? Another person got the treasure the rich man saved.

What is interesting is that some politicians teach basically the same thing that Jesus criticized in that passage.

So what did Jesus mean when he said "rich toward God" in verse 21? That is answered in the following

Luke

012:022 And He said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

012:023 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

012:024 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

012:025 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

012:026 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

012:027 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

012:028 If then God So, clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

012:029 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

012:030 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

012:031 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

012:032 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

012:033 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

012:034 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

To summarize, God blesses in heaven those who help the poor. And God provides for us.

Another key passage is in Mark.

Mark

007:009 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

007:010 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

007:011 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.

007:012 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

007:013 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

In the above passage, Jesus criticized people who did not help their parents. People were required to help their parents. But some adult children did not want to do this. In order to avoid giving money to their parents, they said they needed to give that money to the temple. They believed that by saying this, it eliminated their obligation to help their parents. Jesus condemned this idea.

And again in First Timothy

1 Timothy

005:003 Honour widows that are widows indeed.

005:004 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.

1 Timothy

005:008 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

The point is we cannot escape our obligations to our parents.

The following psalm supports the teaching in Luke 12 verses 15-21.

Psalms

039:005 Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.

039:006 Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

I don't think the Bible is saying we cannot save. But it is warning about excessive savings. And the Bible does teach of great blessings in giving to the point where we cannot save. The following is an example of what Jesus taught.

Luke

021:001 And He looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

021:002 And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

021:003 And He said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:

021:004 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

And the Bible teaches to remember your parents.

Prov

023:022 Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.

So the question is, using Biblical principles, what retirement system is most in keeping with Bible teaching – Social Security (government pension) or relying on personal savings for retirement?

1 John

003:017 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

James

002:016 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

002:017 Even So, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

The following passage does not speak directly on retirement savings. But it is relevant. In Nov 2010, proposals were made in Washington DC to reduce the US deficit by, in part, reducing social security benefits and reducing the top tax rate from 35% to 23%. Or, in other words, it would reduce a benefit for the poor and middle class and decrease taxes for the wealthy.

The following Bible passage has several important teachings including:

1. Do not oppress the poor
2. If you stop listening to God, He will stop listening to you
3. God punishes. This can also include making a land desolate.

Zechariah

007:009 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

007:010 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

007:011 But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

007:012 Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.

007:013 Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; So, they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:

007:014 But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.

So it is important that government policies should not hurt the poor and needy.

Some people argue that social security is charity and government should not legislate charity. But notice 2 things. First, God did set up a system of work-fare in Israel which required farmers not to harvest everything in their fields and vineyards So, the poor could glean food from them. This was a form of charity.

Lev

019:001 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

It continues a few verses later

019:009 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

019:010 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.

Lev

023:022 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.

Notice that in the following passage, God ordered the people of Israel to give money to the poor. This passage is not for the people of today. But it does establish a principle.

Deuteronomy

014:028 At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates:

014:029 And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

The second point in in the above passage that when people failed, the country was punished – not just individual people. Another passage that supports this is in Ezekiel

Ezekiel

016:049 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

016:050 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.

Once again, the point is, here is a community which failed to be charitable and God punished the entire community, not just individuals.

And God did lay down laws for Israel to be charitable.

Exodus

023:010 And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof:

023:011 But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard.

Leviticus

025:001 And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,

025:002 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD.

025:003 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;

025:004 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.

025:005 That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.

025:006 And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant

Some other people suggest that placing senior citizens on welfare is better. The idea is that rather than pay them a monthly pension when they retire, seniors would provide for their own retirement until they run out of money and then they could collect a government pension. And there are other people who propose something in between – that only poor seniors be allowed to collect a pension when they retire. And in 1 Timothy chapter 5, Christians are instructed to care for their elderly family members. Whatever the proposal is, one must look at the big picture and what the outcome would be of that proposal. Some questions might be,

1. Is there an old age safety net for all senior citizens? Are there seniors who have no one who will help them?

2. Can the country afford the proposal?
3. Will people save anything at all for their retirement or rely totally on the government if that retirement system were implemented?
4. Will that proposal (retirement system) cause people to live as that rich man which Jesus preached against?
5. If only some people receive a (government) pension, will those who do not receive a pension support it? (People often do not support things which do not benefit them.)
6. How will you feel when you retire with that system? And how would your opinion change if you fell on hard times 5, 10, or 20 years before you are eligible for a pension?

Some of these questions may not seem very Christian. But we live in a country where most people are not. So, these questions must be asked.

But even if you reject the idea that government should have programs like social security paid for by taxes, even if you believe all help for poor and elderly should be voluntary, *God still holds the country accountable regardless how programs are funded.* A country must find a way to do this that works. A country cannot escape that responsibility.

Issues - Abortion

Introduction – What Is Life?

Many people debate when life begins for a person. Is it at birth? When the fetus has a heartbeat? When a fetus has brain activity? Is life simply based on the condition of one's body?

Wording of the Bible

The wording of the bible matters. It really matters. Even small words matter greatly as Jesus demonstrated long ago when asked a question if life continues after death.

Matthew

022:029 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

022:030 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

022:031 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

022:032 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

So here, in this passage, Jesus states that life continues even after death.

When Life Begins

One question is when does life begin – when does a fetus become a person? Perhaps the most important one is in Jeremiah.

Jeremiah

020:017 **Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb to be always great with me.**

020:018 **Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?**

Read the above passage carefully, slowly, and several times. It speaks volumes. Why did Jeremiah state, "Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave"? Why did he state, "Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow"? If he did not have a spirit, the fetus would be just that – a fetus. He would not be a person until he has a spirit. So, Jeremiah states he was alive while still in the womb. One can infer that a child in the womb who is aborted has no chance, similar to a child lost after birth.

Another passage which states the same thing is as follows.

Psalms

139:013 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

139:014 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

139:015 My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

139:016 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Notice verse 13. It says, "thou hast covered me in my mother's womb". It does not say, "created a body and gave it to me" because that is what it would have said if a person does not have a spirit until birth.

Notice verse 16. The first part says God knew David when he was still an unformed substance or embryo. Bible translators have different interpretations/translations of the second half of the verse. In the KJV translation above, the verse is basically a repeat of the first half saying, David's body's members (arms, legs, etc.) were not yet formed when God knew him. But in other bible translations, the second half of the verse says God knew every day of David's life before he was formed. But regardless of the interpretation of the second half of verse 16, this passage shows David's life began at conception.

Another passage is as follows.

Jeremiah

001:004 **Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,**

001:005 **Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.**

Notice verse 5 above. God does not sanctify a body without a soul/spirit. And remember, we are spirits living in earthly bodies. If God was only sanctifying a hunk of flesh, that passage would have said something like, "before your body camest forth out of the womb I sanctified it, and I ordained your body for a prophet unto the nations". But the passage says, "before thou camest forth" meaning his spirit was in the body in the womb. Otherwise, God could not say he was in the womb because we are spirits in bodies and a body without a spirit is not a person, just a hunk of flesh.

Another Bible passage is

Psalms

051:005 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Newer translations are clearer, stating we are sinful from the time we are conceived. But one point is, if we are sinful from the time of conception, then we are real people at that time. Still in doubt about this? Notice the following passage from the Gospel of Luke when an angel appeared to Zacharias announcing he would have a son.

Luke

001:011 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

001:012 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

001:013 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

001:014 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

001:015 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

001:016 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

001:017 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Newer translations use phrases like, “even before he was born” instead of “even from his mother’s womb” in verse 15. So, was John (the child being spoken of) unique in having a soul/spirit before being born? No. This verse indicates that we have a soul/spirit before we are born.

Another passage showing a person has a soul/spirit before they are born is

Luke

001:041 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, **the babe leaped in her womb**; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

001:042 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

001:043 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

001:044 For, lo, **as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.**

Why would a baby, before birth, leap in the womb? And could a fetus have joy without having a spirit? Why would a baby, before birth, have joy? Because they were whole. They had a spirit.

There are several Bible passages condemning the killing of infants. Many are listed later in this write up. The following is one of them.

Deuteronomy

012:031 Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

The book of Lamentations refers to a siege of Jerusalem. Notice the following verse:

Lamentations

004:003 Even the sea monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.

004:004 The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them.

The NIV translation uses the word ‘jackel’ instead of ‘sea monster’. But the point is this. Notice the criticism in verse 3 that the woman did not feed their babies implying even ‘sea monsters’ or ‘jackels’ were better than they. How does this relate to abortion? There are some in the world today who say food and water should be withheld from deformed babies So, they can die rather than grow up handicapped. However, is that in keeping with the above Bible verse?

Notice verse 15 below. Other translations use the phrase “even before he is born” rather than “from his mother’s womb”. The Holy Spirit only indwells people – not corpses. So, a person is a person even before they are born.

Luke

001:013 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

001:014 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

001:015 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; **and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.**

Then there is the question if abortion should be allowed in cases of rape. But does it matter how the child was conceived? Is not a child a child regardless how it was conceived?

There was some controversy during the 2012 election campaigns when a politician said children were a gift from God. I am not sure if his statement was appropriate in the context in which he said it. But the Bible does state

Psalms

127:003 Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

The New American Standard Bible uses the word 'reward' instead of 'heritage'. One lexicon said the word would be more closely translated as 'an inheritance'.

I do not know why things happen in people's lives. We know from the Bible that we will face trials in our lives.

Bible Verse Saying Abortion Is A Sin

Some claim that there is no bible verse condemning abortion. But notice the following passage

Exodus

021:022 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine.

021:023 And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,

021:024 Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

021:025 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Newer translations like the NIV (which I recommend but do not quote for copy write reasons) make the passage much more clear. Verse 22 speaks of someone injuring a pregnant woman, so, she has a premature child. 'No mischief' means 'no serious injury' to the woman or the child. If that happens, then the offender must pay for the injury. However, 'if any mischief follow', meaning a death occurs, then the offender should give up their life. Some claim this is referring to an injury to the mother. But if that were true, why would there be this passage since injury and death to a person is covered in other passages? That is why many/most conservatives say this passage is referring to the injury or death of the fetus/infant.

Either way, it does violate the following passage.

Exodus

020:013 Thou shalt not kill.

And

Deuteronomy

020:013 Thou shalt not kill.

Bible Verses Justifying Abortion?

Some claim the following passage shows God places no value on fetuses. But a careful reading shows just the opposite.

Exodus

021:022 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, So, that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine.

021:023 And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,

021:024 Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

021:025 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Newer translations like the NIV (which I recommend but do not quote for copy write reasons) make the passage much more clear. Verse 22 speaks of someone injuring a pregnant women So, she has a premature child. 'No mischief' means 'no serious injury' to the woman or the child. If that happens, then the offender must pay for the injury. However, 'if any mischief follow', meaning a death occurs, then the offender should give up their life.

Yes, this is the same passage that condemns abortion as a sin. Some people miss read it and for that reason it is good to read another translation or read what a bible commentary says about the passage.

Some claim the following passage shows God places no value on fetuses.

Leviticus

027:001 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

027:002 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the LORD by thy estimation.

027:003 And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

027:004 And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels.

027:005 And if it be from five years old even unto twenty years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

027:006 And if it be from a month old even unto five years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation shall be three shekels of silver.

But notice, this is a passage about vows. God gave the Jewish nation special rules concerning vows. It has nothing to do with the value of a human life. If it did, then a man's life would only be worth 50 shekels, which is ridiculous. So, using this passage to support abortion is the same – ridiculous.

Some have used the following passage to say fetuses and young infants are not considered persons per the bible.

Numbers

003:014 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying,

003:015 Number the children of Levi after the house of their fathers, by their families: every male from a month old and upward shalt thou number them.

003:016 And Moses numbered them according to the word of the LORD, as he was commanded.

But first of all, the passage does not say fetuses and infants under 1 month are not considered persons. Second, if one reads farther, it appears this count was done for the purpose of taxing the people.

Numbers

003:047 Thou shalt even take five shekels apiece by the poll, after the shekel of the sanctuary shalt thou take them:
(the shekel is twenty gerahs:)

003:048 And thou shalt give the money, wherewith the odd number of them is to be redeemed, unto Aaron and to his sons.

003:049 And Moses took the redemption money of them that were over and above them that were redeemed by the Levites:

003:050 Of the firstborn of the children of Israel took he the money; a thousand three hundred and threescore and five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary:

003:051 And Moses gave the money of them that were redeemed unto Aaron and to his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

Another argument some use for abortion is they claim God sometimes orders the killing of fetuses, or of pregnant women. The following are some verses which are used.

Numbers

031:015 And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive?

031:016 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.

031:017 Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him.

Hosea

009:007 The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come; Israel shall know it: the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred.

009:008 The watchman of Ephraim was with my God: but the prophet is a snare of a fowler in all his ways, and hatred in the house of his God.

009:009 They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah: therefore he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins.

009:010 I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time: but they went to Baalpeor, and separated themselves unto that shame; and their abominations were according as they loved.

009:011 As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.

009:012 Though they bring up their children, yet will I bereave them, that there shall not be a man left: yea, woe also to them when I depart from them!

009:013 Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus, is planted in a pleasant place: but Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer.

009:014 Give them, O LORD: what wilt thou give? give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.

009:015 All their wickedness is in Gilgal: for there I hated them: for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of mine house, I will love them no more: all their princes are revolvers.

009:016 Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit: yea, though they bring forth, yet will I slay even the beloved fruit of their womb.

Hosea

013:016 Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up.

2 Samuel

012:013 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

012:014 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

Some people use the above verses as justification for abortion. The claim is that God approves the killing of fetuses. But read these passages clearly and carefully. In them, God is declaring a punishment for the sins of Israel, including the killing of men, women, children and the unborn. So, by these people logic, God would approve the killing of anyone. Obviously, that is a wrong interpretation. This passage simply declares God's punishment. And remember, we are NOT God. Just because God can justifiably have people be slain does not give people the license to do the same.

Some have said the following passage shows God sometimes requires the execution of pregnant women.

Genesis

038:024 And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt.

Notice, that God did NOT require or order an execution. This is something that happened and is in the historical record. There are a lot of passages in the bible that tell what happened and have nothing to do with God's will. So, using this passage as justification for abortions has no merit.

Some people have pointed to Numbers 5:5-31 as a way to justify abortion. The key verses are 27-28. Rather than take the verses out of context, the entire passage is below.

Numbers

005:005 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

005:006 Speak unto the children of Israel, When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against the LORD, and that person be guilty;

005:007 Then they shall confess their sin which they have done: and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed.

005:008 But if the man have no kinsman to recompense the trespass unto, let the trespass be recompensed unto the LORD, even to the priest; beside the ram of the atonement, whereby an atonement shall be made for him.

005:009 And every offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they bring unto the priest, shall be his.

005:010 And every man's hallowed things shall be his: whatsoever any man giveth the priest, it shall be his.

005:011 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

005:012 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man's wife go aside, and commit a trespass against him,

- 005:013 And a man lie with her carnally, and it be hid from the eyes of her husband, and be kept close, and she be defiled, and there be no witness against her, neither she be taken with the manner;
- 005:014 And the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled: or if the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled:
- 005:015 Then shall the man bring his wife unto the priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an ephah of barley meal; he shall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon; for it is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.
- 005:016 And the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD:
- 005:017 And the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel; and of the dust that is in the floor of the tabernacle the priest shall take, and put it into the water:
- 005:018 And the priest shall set the woman before the LORD, and uncover the woman's head, and put the offering of memorial in her hands, which is the jealousy offering: and the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that causeth the curse:
- 005:019 And the priest shall charge her by an oath, and say unto the woman, If no man have lain with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside to uncleanness with another instead of thy husband, be thou free from this bitter water that causeth the curse:
- 005:020 But if thou hast gone aside to another instead of thy husband, and if thou be defiled, and some man have lain with thee beside thine husband:
- 005:021 Then the priest shall charge the woman with an oath of cursing, and the priest shall say unto the woman, The LORD make thee a curse and an oath among thy people, when the LORD doth make thy thigh to rot, and thy belly to swell;
- 005:022 And this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy bowels, to make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot: And the woman shall say, Amen, amen.
- 005:023 And the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall blot them out with the bitter water:
- 005:024 And he shall cause the woman to drink the bitter water that causeth the curse: and the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter.
- 005:025 Then the priest shall take the jealousy offering out of the woman's hand, and shall wave the offering before the LORD, and offer it upon the altar:
- 005:026 And the priest shall take an handful of the offering, even the memorial thereof, and burn it upon the altar, and afterward shall cause the woman to drink the water.
- 005:027 And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass, that, if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot: and the woman shall be a curse among her people.
- 005:028 And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean; then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed.
- 005:029 This is the law of jealousies, when a wife goeth aside to another instead of her husband, and is defiled;
- 005:030 Or when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and shall set the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall execute upon her all this law.
- 005:031 Then shall the man be guiltless from iniquity, and this woman shall bear her iniquity.

Other translations like the New King James Version (NKJV) and American Standard Version (ASV) have similar wording to verses 27-28. But the NIV uses the phrase "your womb miscarry". The thought being if God causes miscarriages, then abortions are OK.

Two points here. First, which translation does one believe is the best? The key word here is the Hebrew word יָרֵכָה (yə-rê-kāh), which literally means thigh, loin, flank, or side – not womb. So, why might have it been translated as ‘womb’? To answer this, one must remember that many modern scholars translate ideas, not word for word from the Hebrew or Greek. This is because we structure our sentences differently and older sentence structures may sound awkward. The scholars may have used the word ‘womb’ not understanding the meaning of the passage. So, why was the curse on the thigh when a woman broke her wedding vow? It may be because of the way a vow was traditionally made. Notice the following 2 passages in Genesis. The first one is

Genesis

024:001 And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

024:002 **And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:**

024:003 **And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:**

024:004 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

024:005 And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?

024:006 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.

024:007 The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

024:008 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

024:009 **And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.**

The second is

Genesis

047:029 **And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt:**

047:030 **But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said.**

047:031 **And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head**

So, placing a hand under a thigh was the manner in which people made vows. So, the shriveling of a thigh in Numbers 5:27 may be indicating the woman's vows are worthless.

Second, even if the NIV is the best translation, the thought is that the woman would no longer be able to have children. This would be a punishment by God. But this is not a justification for abortion. (Miscarriages occur mainly because the fetus is deformed in some way. Miscarriages are common.)

Another passage that is sometimes used to justify abortion is

2 Kings

008:012 And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

008:013 And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.

Once again, this has nothing to do with abortion. It is a prophecy of what Hazael, future king of Syria, would do. Nothing in the passage suggests that God approves this.

Another passage some have used is 2 Kings 15:16. But they ignore verse 18 and nowhere does it say God approved what happened.

2 Kings

015:014 For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

015:015 And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

015:016 Then Menahem smote Tiphshah, and all that were therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.

015:017 In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah **began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel**, and reigned ten years in Samaria.

015:018 **And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.**

Another passage used to falsely justify abortion is Isaiah 13:18. The argument is that if God did not care for the unborn, then neither should we. It is best to read that passage in context. Isaiah 13 is a prophecy of the fall of several ancient nations. It also includes reference to the Great Tribulation Period (ie, Day of the Lord) which is to come.

Isaiah

013:001 The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

013:002 Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.

013:003 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness.

013:004 The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the LORD of hosts mustereth the host of the battle.

013:005 They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

013:006 **Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.**

013:007 Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt:

013:008 And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames.

013:009 **Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.**

- 013:010 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.
- 013:011 **And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.**
- 013:012 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.
- 013:013 Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.
- 013:014 And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up: they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.
- 013:015 Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword.
- 013:016 **Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished.**
- 013:017 **Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it.**
- 013:018 **Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eyes shall not spare children.**
- 013:019 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.
- 013:020 It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.
- 013:021 But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.
- 013:022 And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged

First, the above passage is about God's judgement and punishment of nations which turn their backs on Him. Verse 19 reference to Sodom and Gomorrah implies they were guilty of the same abominations as those cities. This passage is about God's judgement. It has nothing to do with what we can do on the earth in regard to killing people. And to those who believe that it does, then they must claim that it also would justify killing anyone, which it does not.

People sometimes forgot the prophecies of the Great Tribulation Period when roughly half the world's population dies and the remainder suffer many plagues. During this time, many will turn to God and be saved. That is part of the purpose of it.

Another passage sometimes incorrectly used to justify abortion Hosea 9:14 and 16. It is best to read it in context.

Hosea

- 009:001 **Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as other people: for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, thou hast loved a reward upon every cornfloor.**
- 009:002 The floor and the winepress shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail in her.
- 009:003 They shall not dwell in the LORD's land; but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean things in Assyria.
- 009:004 They shall not offer wine offerings to the LORD, neither shall they be pleasing unto him: their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted: for their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the LORD.

- 009:005 What will ye do in the solemn day, and in the day of the feast of the LORD?
- 009:006 For, lo, they are gone because of destruction: Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them: the pleasant places for their silver, nettles shall possess them: thorns shall be in their tabernacles.
- 009:007 The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come; Israel shall know it: the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred.
- 009:008 The watchman of Ephraim was with my God: but the prophet is a snare of a fowler in all his ways, and hatred in the house of his God.
- 009:009 **They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah: therefore he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins.**
- 009:010 I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time: but they went to Baalpeor, and separated themselves unto that shame; and their abominations were according as they loved.
- 009:011 As for Ephraim, their glory shall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.
- 009:012 Though they bring up their children, yet will I bereave them, that there shall not be a man left: yea, woe also to them when I depart from them!
- 009:013 Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus, is planted in a pleasant place: but Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer.
- 009:014 **Give them, O LORD: what wilt thou give? give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.**
- 009:015 **All their wickedness is in Gilgal: for there I hated them: for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of mine house, I will love them no more: all their princes are revolvers.**
- 009:016 **Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit: yea, though they bring forth, yet will I slay even the beloved fruit of their womb.**
- 009:017 **My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations**

Once again, this is a judgement of God on the nation. It has nothing to do with what we can do to infants or other people. This is God's judgement and punishment. And sometimes it is more merciful to destroy a people than to let it continue. This may sound shocking. But remember this. All good things come from God. When we die, we either go to paradise or a place of torment. People who turned their backs on God in this life should not expect anything good from God in the after life. Should God let generation after generation continue to have children, all of which will go to hell? Is that more merciful? And we know from history, when God punished Israel after they forgot Him, it cause a return to God, and they were saved. And there are prophecies of the Great Tribulation Period which tell us that some people will repent and be saved (go to heaven even if they are killed in that period). Some have compared God's judgement to a surgeon who amputates a cancerous limb to save the patient. It is a terrible procedure. But it was done to save life.

Another passage that is sometimes used to try to justify abortion is

Mark

- 012:029 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:
- 012:030 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.
- 012:031 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

In particular, in 2020, California put up billboards urging women living in state that banned abortion to come to California to get abortions. Part of the billboard quoted verse 3 where Jesus says, "Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no greater commandment than these."

It is wrong to cherry picking bible verses. To understand a doctrine, one must consider all related bible verses. The bible never contradicts itself. So, if one's interpretation is contrary to any part of the bible, then they have the wrong interpretation - which is exactly the mistake that California made. There are bible passages that make it clear that a fetus is a person before birth and abortion is killing that person. Also, California is wrong in thinking Christians loving a neighbor means they want/let their neighbors to commit murder.

People Are Spirits in Bodies

Many pro-abortion people have a miss understanding what a person really is. They see a body and believe that is a person. They talk about a fetus when it is newly conceived and say that tiny group of cells which cannot think cannot be called a person. But the bible teaches something very different. The bible teaches that we are spirits living in bodies.

So, what is a human? Atheists see people as having a body and that is all. But that is not what the bible teaches. The bible tells us that we are spirits living in physical bodies. The earliest statement about this is in Genesis.

Genesis

002:007 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, **and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.**

The above passage is a bit poetic. And people often use the words 'soul' and 'spirit' interchangeably. But there is a slight difference in their meaning. The following passages highlight the fact that people are spirits with a soul living in a body.

Hebrews

004:012 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of **soul and spirit**, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

1 Thessalonians

005:023 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and **I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body** be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Separation of Body and Spirit at Death

When we die, our physical bodies remain on earth while our spirits 'return to God'. The following passages speak on this.

Ecclesiastes

012:007 **Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.**

James

002:026 **For as the body without the spirit is dead**, So, faith without works is dead also

The following is part of a passage when Jesus raise a girl who was dead. Once again, it shows a person's spirit was absent from the body.

Luke

008:054 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.

008:055 **And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway:** and he commanded to give her meat

In the following passage, the Apostle Paul says these bodies are just places where we live. Our bodies are not who we are.

2 Corinthians

005:006 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

005:007 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

005:008 **We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.**

The following passage is from Jesus's crucifixion and death on the cross.

Luke

023:039 **And one of the malefactors which were hanged** railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

023:040 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

023:041 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

023:042 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

023:043 **And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.**

The following parable of Jesus tells us that when a person dies, their spirit either goes to paradise or to a place of torment.

Luke

16:019 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

016:020 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

016:021 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

016:022 **And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;**

016:023 **And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.**

016:024 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

016:025 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

016:026 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: So, that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

016:027 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

016:028 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

016:029 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

016:030 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

016:031 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead

The point of all these passages is to point out that when a person dies, their spirit leaves their body and either goes to paradise or a place of torment.

Other References to Our Spirit

John

004:024 **God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.**

Romans

008:014 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

008:015 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

008:016 **The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:**

Galatians

006:018 Brethren, **the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.** Amen

2 Timothy

004:022 **The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.** Grace be with you. Amen

Philemon

001:025 **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.** Amen

Hebrews

012:022 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

012:023 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, **and to the spirits of just men made perfect,**

012:024 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

James

004:005 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The **spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?**

Acts

007:059 **And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.**

007:060 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Acts

017:016 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, **his spirit was stirred in him**, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.

Acts

018:005 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, **Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.**

Romans

001:009 For God is my witness, **whom I serve with my spirit** in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

001:010 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

Romans

002:028 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

002:029 **But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.**

1 Corinthians

005:001 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not So, much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

005:002 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.

005:003 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath So, done this deed,

005:004 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

005:005 **To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

1 Corinthians

006:020 **For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**

Does Banning Abortion Prohibit Religious Freedom

Some have claimed that banning abortion religious freedom and therefore abortion must be legal. The thought is that some people do not believe a fetus is a person until they are born. Also, to believe life begins at conception means that any fetus created by In vitro fertilization (IVF) is a human person and it cannot be destroyed. So, accepting that belief complicates the legality of the procedure. And this could mean restrictions on people who believe they should have more children thru IVF.

Yes, banning abortion may prohibit some religious freedom. But there are already limitations to religious freedoms which are good and proper. For example, the Aztecs believe in cutting out human hearts to appease their gods while the people were still alive. This is no longer allowed, for good reason. Similarly, abortion is the murder of another human being, regardless of what the practitioner believes

Issues – Infanticide

This is similar to abortion but a bit different, and perhaps more heinous. Infanticide is the murder of infants. As of 2019, this was becoming an issue in the US.

New York State passed a law allowing abortions for *any* reason right up to the time of birth. It does not limit abortions to cases where the mother's life is at stake. The governor of Illinois proposed a similar law which may come up for a vote after this writing. But if an infant is moments from birth, how can people say the child is not a human being? If an infant can live outside the womb, how can governments declare the child is not a human with human rights?

But this issue goes further than just this. The US Congress also rejected a law that would have required doctors and hospitals to treat infants who survived an abortion, and now were outside the womb. That is, doctors and hospitals would be required to save the lives of infants who survived abortions. Instead, the US Congress by rejecting this law would allow doctors, nurses and hospitals to let these infants die.

In January 2019, the governor of Virginia proposed letting parents decide what to do with the infant after birth – meaning they would have the choice of taking the child home, placing it up for adoption, or letting the hospital terminate the infant's life. The exact quote from the governor is, "If a mother is in labor, I can tell you exactly what would happen. The infant would be delivered. The infant would be kept comfortable. The infant would be resuscitated if that's what the mother and the family desired, and then a discussion would ensue between the physicians and the mother,".

Are these not all examples of infanticide?

So how does God feel about the killing of children? The following are some passages where God condemned the practice of sacrificing children in fire on altars. The term 'pass thru the fire' refers to this.

Deuteronomy

018:009 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

018:010 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch.

018:011 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

018:012 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Deuteronomy

012:031 Thou shalt not do so, unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

Leviticus

018:021 And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

See the section entitled "Judgement Example – Assyrian Captivity of Israel circa 925", and notice verse 17 and 18 in it. Here God declares that one of the reasons for the destruction of Israel is because they burned children in altars.

2 Kings

017:017 And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

017:018 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.

Another example from the bible is around 765BC.

2 Chronicles

028:001 Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father:□

028:002 For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim.

028:003 Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

Lamentations

004:003 Even the sea monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.

004:004 The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them.

The NIV translation uses the word 'jackel' instead of 'sea monster'. But the point is this. Notice the criticism in verse 3 that the woman did not feed their babies implying even 'sea monsters' or 'jackels' were better than they. How does this relate to abortion and infanticide? There are some in the world today who say food and water should be withheld from deformed babies So, they can die rather than grow up handicapped. However, is that in keeping with the above Bible verse?

The following verse is rather all encompassing.

Exodus

020:013 Thou shalt not kill.

So if a child outside the womb, or an infant who would be viable outside the womb is not covered by this commandment, then who is? What is the cutoff age?

There are other passages too. But these are given to show how God feels about the murder of one's children. These passages also record that God punishes nations for these kinds of acts.

Issues – Welfare / Workfare/Bankruptcy

Workfare

The Bible has several teachings on welfare and helping the poor. One teaching is that we are to help the poor even if it means never being repaid. To help the poor, God instructed Jewish farmers not to collect all their grain. More specifically, allow the poor to gather the grain which falls to the ground. So, it was sort of a work fare. But God also instructed people to give or lend to the poor even if it means never being repaid. Another teaching is that if a person can work but refuses work, then they should not eat.

Leviticus

019:001 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

It continues a few verses later

019:009 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

019:010 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus

023:022 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy

010:017 For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

010:018 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

010:019 Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Deuteronomy

014:028 At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates:

014:029 And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

Deuteronomy

015:007 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

015:008 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

015:009 Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

015:010 Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

Deuteronomy

024:019 When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands.

024:020 When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

024:021 When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

Deuteronomy

026:012 When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled;

026:013 Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them.

There is a warning in the following Psalm regarding oppressing the poor.

Psalms

072:004 He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

The following verse reinforces what is said in Psalms.

Proverbs

014:031 He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

Isaiah

058:007 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

058:008 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward.

The Bible does teach that those who can should work. Notice the passage says 'would not work' – not cannot work.

2 Thessalonians

003:010 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

The Bible reinforces this concept in the following passage

2 Thessalonians

003:011 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

003:012 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

The following Bible verses state that a lazy man will make excuses - they will make any task they are given sound not doable. But a good person will just do the task without excuses.

Proverbs

015:019 The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.

Proverbs

020:004 The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.

These passages are from Proverbs. Notice that they contain both encouragement and judgment – as in verse 6:11.

Proverbs

006:006 Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

006:007 Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,

006:008 Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.

006:009 How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

006:010 Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

006:011 So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

So how can these principles be followed in today's American society? Should it affect how the welfare and unemployment programs are run?

Welfare (Loans)

God told the nation of Israel to loan money to the needy. Then every seven years, if the loan was not repaid, release the person from the debt. This does not mean that countries today must follow that exact same practice. But it does lay down principles to follow in helping the poor.

Deuteronomy

015:001 At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release.

015:002 And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD's release.

015:003 Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again: but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release;

Notice that God planned distribution of wealth So, there would be no poor

Deuteronomy

015:004 Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it:

Lend to the poor to meet their needs.

Deuteronomy

015:007 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

015:008 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

Lend to the poor to meet their needs even if it will not be repaid. Continuation of the above.

Deuteronomy

015:009 Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

015:010 Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

015:011 For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

Indentured servants

Deuteronomy

015:012 And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

015:013 And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty:

015:014 Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.

Family Helping Family

Many 3rd world nations have no national or local government welfare programs – no unemployment insurance, no family financial assistance, no rent assistance, etc. Instead, extended families provide support to members of that family. By the term ‘extended family’, I mean immediate family, cousins, aunts and uncles, and the like. Everyone needs help occasionally. And having an extended family which helps one another increases the safety of all.

This concept is also supported in the following passage.

1 Timothy

005:008 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

In countries like the US, there are government programs to ease financial problems that may arise in people’s lives. However, government programs sometimes have exceptions or holes where people fall thru. So, this passage is relevant to major countries too.

Bankruptcy

The Bible does not speak to bankruptcy directly. However, there are passages discussing pledges for loans.

Deuteronomy

024:017 Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge:

Deuteronomy

024:010 When thou dost lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge.

024:011 Thou shalt stand abroad, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee.

024:012 And if the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge:

024:013 In any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and bless thee: and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the LORD thy God.

Summary

It is interesting that

God gave workfare, not welfare to the poor.

The nation of Israel was required to give the poor and opportunity to work (ie, glean the fields)

People were required to lend money to the needy.

The needy borrowed money – meaning there was a requirement to pay back the money. This could be either an actual repayment of the loan, or indentured servitude, or a pledge.

Loans were cancelled every seventh year. Farm land sold had to be returned to the original owner in the year of Jubilee (every 70th year).

I do not believe nations are required to follow these exact rules. But it does lay down principles for helping the poor.

Issues – Universal Basic Income

Some have proposed that the government send monthly payments or income to all residents – rich or poor, hard workers or slothful people, young or old, able bodies and disabled people, intelligent and those who are not. But what are the biblical principles regarding this?

Universal basic income would be another type of welfare. The idea is that everyone would get a monthly payment to help pay for essentials. This way one's earnings would be used to enhance the quality of life.

There is little commentary in this section because there are many very clear, concise passages on this topic.

See also the section entitled "Issues – Welfare/Workfare/Bankruptcy"

Heart of the Matter

God says that, if we are able to work, then we should work for what we get.

2 Thessalonians

003:010 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

2 Thessalonians

003:011 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

003:012 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

God's Command to Work for a Living

Genesis

003:019 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

1 Thessalonians

004:011 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

004:012 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

Ephesians

004:028 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Ecclesiastes

002:024 There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.

Psalms

128:001 Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.

128:002 For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

Colossians

003:023 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

003:024 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

In the following passage, the apostle Paul instructs people to take care of widows in their families, especially the old ones. He encourages the younger ones to remarry and take care of themselves. He said extended families should help their own and not burden the church with trying to provide for these widows.

1 Timothy

005:008 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

005:009 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man.

005:010 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

005:011 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;

005:012 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

005:013 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

005:014 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

005:015 For some are already turned aside after Satan.

005:016 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

God's Condemnation of the Lazy

God harshly criticizes people who refuse to work.

Proverbs

006:006 Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

006:007 Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,

006:008 Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.

006:009 How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

006:010 Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

006:011 So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

Proverbs

010:004 He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

Proverbs

010:026 As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, So, is the sluggard to them that send him.

Proverbs

012:024 The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.

Proverbs

013:004 The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

Proverbs

014:023 In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.

Proverbs

018:009 He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

Proverbs

020:004 The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.

Proverbs

021:025 The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.

The following passage may seem a bit confusing. The idea in verse 13 is that the slothful reasons for not working make no sense or are silly and not true.

Proverbs

026:013 The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets.

026:014 As the door turneth upon his hinges, So, doth the slothful upon his bed.

026:015 The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.

026:016 The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

Summary and Personal Note

We should not be giving money to people who will not work. Yes, there are people who cannot work because of a disability or age, and the like. And there are people who lack work because they lost their job and have problems finding another.

Yes, some become homeless for no fault of their own. I remember one co-worker who revealed he was homeless for a few years. He had lost his job, and because of a down turn in the economy, could not find another. He tried living on savings for a while. Then lost his family and got divorced. After being homeless for a couple of years, he found another job.

But there are people who will not work. I suspect most adults have known of someone, probably several, who are/were like this. I have known several. Some eventually got a steady job because the pressure their parents put on them. It sometimes took many years for these lazy people to finally settle into a steady job.

Then there are others who are not good at budgeting money. I have known several who squandered money on things they did not need and then beg relatives for money when taxes are due.

I have heard many people say, you never loan these people money because, regardless what they say, they will not pay it back. So, if you feel sorry, remember any money you give will be a gift.

The bible warns not to give money to sluggards.

My personal belief is that if government wants to help people, it is better to target an expense, like food, in which to give help rather than to give cash. This way it will probably be spent on necessities. (There are always ways of cheating the system.)

Issues - War

The following is an interesting condemnation or judgment against Babylon, which was a great empire about 2500 years ago. Notice the reason why God condemns the empire. Especially notice verse 8.

Habakkuk

002:005 Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:

002:006 Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!

002:007 Shall they not rise up suddenly that shall bite thee, and awake that shall vex thee, and thou shalt be for booties unto them?

002:008 Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

The following passage is directed to individuals. But its principles are worth noting

Romans

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

012:019 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

012:020 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

012:021 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Hebrews

012:014 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

The above passage is saying we should live in peace with everyone.

James

001:020 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

James

004:001 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

004:002 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

004:003 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

004:004 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

1 Corinthians

016:014 Let all your things be done with charity.

The NIV translation uses the work 'love' instead of 'charity'

Some people claim they are warring against others in the name of religion. That may be. However, the above passages state that is contrary to God's will for us today. Another verse that may be relevant is below.

Matthew

007:021 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

007:022 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

007:023 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Issues - Schools

The Bible does not say much about schooling. But it does say a lot on how children should be raised. And the Bible teaches that children should be raised in a godly environment and it teaches the consequences if they are not. So, why include this in a section about schools? It is because children are in schools much of their time and are influenced by its environment.

The following passage from Deuteronomy is a key passage stating how children are to be raised. Notice especially verse 7 which implies they are to be taught throughout the day.

Deuteronomy

006:004 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

006:005 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

006:006 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

006:007 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

006:008 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

006:009 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Deuteronomy

011:018 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

011:019 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

011:020 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates

Joshua

001:008 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

So if children are to be raised in a godly environment throughout the day, then sending children to a godless public school runs contrary to this principle. Of course, some public schools are better than others. The teachers and students in some public schools mostly all come from a Christian background. However, as of this writing, things are changing. Students are required to read stories which include gay couples. They are required to share (dress and undress in front of) transgender students of the opposite sex. And they are taught a morality which is different than that taught in the bible.

Why is this important for children?

Proverbs

022:006 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Because this will influence them for their entire lives. And why is that important? As mentioned before, Christianity is about having a relationship with God. How we live affects our relationship with Him, just as how you live can affect one's marriage. When the following passage speaks of walking in the light, it means living according to biblical principles.

1 John

001:007 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

The following verse states Christians should be separated from people with poor morals. This can apply to public schools where children from immoral families may be attending.

1 Corinthians

015:033 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

Some newer translations use the word 'company' instead of 'communications', and use the word 'character' or 'morals' instead of 'manners'.

Notice the following passage. How can children draw near to God in a godless school environment? Depending on the school, it may not be easy.

James

004:008 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.

Notice the following passage. How can Christian students follow this teaching in a public school?

2 Timothy

003:001 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

003:002 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

003:003 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

003:004 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

003:005 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

The point is, Christians live in an immoral world and they need to be tolerant of people. But that does not mean they must accept the actions of worldly people or to socialize with them.

There is no such thing as quality education without bible study. As Jesus said in Mark 8:36, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?". So, it is important to teach bible lessons to children. If parents have problem with this, there are some good bible studies on the internet and radio.

Public schools are void of bible teaching and Christian morals. So, it is not possible to send children to one and fully follow the instructions of Deuteronomy 11:18-19, " Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. " You see, we are to bring up children in a Christian environment - which the public schools do not offer.

Story of Lot

The story of Lot is a great example of what can occur when people fail to follow God's commandment on this. In this story, Lot, a Godly man and nephew of Abraham, chooses to live near Sodom because it was a fertile area. He ignored the fact that the people there were very evil. Later, the Bible reveals how this warped the judgment of his family and how evil his children became.

The story starts with his decision to live near Sodom.

Genesis

013:007 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

013:008 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.

013:009 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

013:010 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

013:011 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

013:012 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

013:013 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

God then warns Abraham that he plans to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because of the evil population. Abraham asks God if he would spare the cities for the sake of the righteous (good people). God agrees.

Genesis

018:020 And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;

018:021 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

018:022 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.

018:023 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

018:024 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

018:025 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

018:026 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

018:027 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and ashes:

018:028 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.

018:029 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake.

018:030 And he said unto him, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.

018:031 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.

018:032 And he said, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.

018:033 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

Next, Lot meets 2 men, some believe they were angels in human form. Notice in chapter 19 verse 5, men of Sodom asked Lot for the men So, they could 'know them' – ie, know them sexually. Notice how warped Lot's view is in verse 8 when he offers his daughters to the men outside his house. Yet he is considered 'righteous' because he is being spared by God. (Remember in chapter 15, verse 6 state the following about Abraham, So, it is true of Lot too regardless of his actions, "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.".)

Genesis

019:001 And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

019:002 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.

019:003 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

019:004 But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:

019:005 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

019:006 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,

019:007 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not So, wickedly.

019:008 Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

019:009 And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door.

019:010 But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.

019:011 And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: So, that they wearied themselves to find the door.

Then God destroyed the 2 cities. Notice that the 2 men (or angels) took Lot, his wife, and his 2 married daughters, but his 2 sons in law did not go, implying they did not believe in God.

Genesis

019:012 And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place:

019:013 For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.

019:014 And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

- 019:015 And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.
- 019:016 And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.
- 019:017 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.
- 019:018 And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my LORD:
- 019:019 Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:
- 019:020 Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.
- 019:021 And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.
- 019:022 Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.
- 019:023 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.
- 019:024 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;
- 019:025 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.
- 019:026 But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

The epilog to this story is an illustration on how corrupt Lot's daughters were. They caused their father to become drunk and sleep with them.

Genesis

- 019:030 And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.
- 019:031 And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth:
- 019:032 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.
- 019:033 And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.
- 019:034 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.
- 019:035 And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.
- 019:036 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

And finally

2 Peter

- 002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;
- 002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

This story of Lot illustrates how living in a godless community corrupted him and his family.

- Lot's judgment was corrupted by offering his daughters to the men of Sodom.
- Some of his daughters married godless men who were later destroyed in the city – both those daughters and their husbands.
- His wife failed to believe and died.
- His unmarried daughters caused their father to get drunk and have children by him.

2 Peter indicates only Lot was a just person, implying he lost his entire family to all eternity, meaning they will spend eternity with the condemned. How tragic.

This illustrates how living in a depraved society can destroy one's family. Notice the families of his married daughters died, his wife died, his possessions in those cities were destroyed, and his unmarried daughters were corrupted and his entire family probably went to a place of torment after dying (probably did not have a saving faith in God) because the bible only mentions that Lot was a 'godly' man.

Jude

001:004 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

001:005 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

001:006 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

001:007 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

The bible teaches we are saved by grace thru faith in Jesus/God and we can work towards a reward in heaven. It also teaches we still go to heaven but lose a reward by ungodly living. Lot may have lost a reward in heaven. Why it is important for Christians to have their children raised (go to) Christian schools rather than godless schools, or schools lacking Christian teaching and principals.

Reap What You Sow

Galations

006:007 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

006:008 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

So do not be surprised that if children are sent to godless schools with godless morality, they grow up to be godless adults with godless morality. Of course, this does not always happen. But does happen.

See also the judgment of Moab.

The following passage describes the blessings that come in someone's life who follow God. This passage can apply to people of any age. For school children, how can this be accomplished if they are in an agnostic environment of a US public school? It cannot.

Psalms

001:001 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

001:002 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

001:003 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Example of Godless Morality and Values Taught in Public Schools

Another illustration on how American public schools are in conflict with Christians occurred in the 1970's. Back then, a popular song called, "The Greatest Love" stated that the greatest love was learning to love oneself. I remember seeing on TV a group of school children being lead by a teacher to sing that song. I have also heard some educators state it is important to build self-esteem in students. Problem is, some of this is not in keeping with God's teaching. For example, regarding self-love:

Deuteronomy

006:004 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

006:005 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

And regarding pride:

Romans

012:003 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Philippians

002:003 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Jeremiah

009:023 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

009:024 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

The following verses in Ephesians summaries the point.

Ephesians

004:017 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

004:018 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

004:019 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Public schools practice and teach earthly ethics and values – not the morality and values of God described in the Bible. For example, many public schools teach some children have gay/lesbian parents – as if that is OK. And as of 2013, many public schools allow children as early as kindergarten chose if they want to use a boys’ or girls’ washroom and showers because they school does not want to offend children who want to be of the other sex. But these actions are contrary to Biblical morality and teachings. So, in effect, public schools are teaching religious morality that is contrary to that of Christianity. And government requires children to attend schools and government takes funds from Christians for public schools – thus depriving Christians of the money they need to support Christian education. In a way, this is type of violation of the separation of Church and State because the government’s actions, and the morality it teaches in public schools, directly hurt Christians. Some people claim the current system is fair. But it is not right to take advantage of poor Christians by taxing them for public schools So, they do not have money for Christian ones? Is it right to teach agnostic beliefs that are contrary to other religions?

Children Lost Due to Lack of Knowledge

The book of Hosea also provides insight. In Hosea’s day, Israel was being judged by God.. The problem was His people had no knowledge. They may have had religious observances or habits but they really had no knowledge or understanding of Him. This lead to sin..

Hosea

004:001 Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.

Once again, what caused this situation? They forgot God’s law and they lacked knowledge of God.

Hosea

004:006 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

Quality Education

One final point... You can’t have a world class education without bible study in a school which has a Christian environment. As Jesus said,

Matthew

016:026 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

Legality of Christian Studies

On June 30, 2020, the US Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision ruled that if a school system has a ‘charter school’ program, that is, a program where children can attend private schools at taxpayer expense, then that program must allow payments for parents to send children to parochial (religious) schools (grade and high schools). A case came up before the court over whether this was allowed in Montana which has a law forbidding this. The US Supreme Court in its ruling states that the US Constitution’s First Amendment has precedence and allows it. This case involved a school with religious ties but did not teach religion.

However, the Court also ruled that this only applies if the school system allows payments to charter schools. If there is no charter school program, then no payments can be made to parochial schools. Or, more specifically, “A state need not subsidize private education. But once a state decides to do so, it cannot disqualify some private schools solely because they are religious.”

A similar case came before the US Supreme Court in 2022. The state of Maine had a school voucher programs that lived in areas not near a public school. However, Maine's law prevented the vouchers being used at parochial schools. On June 21, 2022, SCOTUS ruled 6-3 that that was discrimination against parochial schools because of their religious teachings and therefore violated the First Amendment. SCOTUS ruled the vouchers must be allowed to be used in parochial schools. The case was Carson v. Makin, No. 20-1088. This case involved a school that teaches religion, more specifically, Christianity.

Some years prior to the Supreme Court rulings, the Indiana Supreme Court ruled that it did not violate the constitution for school vouchers to be used at parochial schools, So, long as the parents were nor required to send their children to one.

Warning to Teachers

Matthew

018:006 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

018:007 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

Luke

017:001 Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

017:002 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

Teachers are with children at least as much as their parents. They are roll models. So, it is important that they be good Christian roll models, even if they are not Christian. What does this mean? It means they should conduct themselves according to biblical principles or morality while with the children. It means when teaching, not to say anything that might offend a Christian student's faith. And it means, when applicable, to teach from a Christian viewpoint.

Doing anything that could affect a child's faith must be avoided. A teacher's conduct and teaching must not cause a child to reject or doubt God.

Indoctrination of School Children

Some parents who oppose parochial schools criticize them for 'indoctrinating' children with the Christian religion. Is what the parochial schools do indoctrination? If that is what they want to call it, then yes. But there are sound biblical reasons for doing so. Remember, as stated earlier, the bible says in the book of Deuteronomy that children are to be raised in a godly environment 24/7 and taught the scriptures. If they want to call that indoctrination, then that is what God commands. This form of indoctrination is good and proper.

The following passage from Deuteronomy is a key passage stating how children are to be raised. Notice especially verse 7 which implies they are to be taught throughout the day.

Deuteronomy

006:004 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

006:005 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

006:006 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

006:007 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

006:008 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

006:009 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Deuteronomy

011:018 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

011:019 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

011:020 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates

Joshua

001:008 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Public Schools Not Fit For Christians

In summary, public schools are no longer fit for Christian children. Their morality and teachings often conflict with biblical teachings. In short, they teach a type of secular or humanistic religion which is contrary to Christianity, and in that way, violate the First Amendment's freedom of religion guarantees.

Issues – Banning Books / Burning Books in Schools

In 2022, there have been numerous news articles about schools including pornographic or LGBTQ books in school libraries, especially in grade school libraries. And sometimes these news articles report that such books are part of required reading in the school. Some parents object while teachers and school administrators push back saying banning books is wrong. At least one compared those who would ban such books to Adolf Hitler's crusade to burn undesirable books.

So what does the bible say about it?

Do Not Lead Children Astray

God is very harsh on those who lead children away from Him, on those who push children into sin. Notice the following passage.

Matthew

018:001 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

018:002 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

018:003 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

018:004 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

018:005 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

018:006 **But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.**

018:007 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; **but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!**

This is a grave warning to those who would push sin onto children. In the above passage, Jesus says it is better for a person that they die now rather than lead children astray, implying that their punishment in hell will be much worse if they lead others into sin, and away from God.

Book Burning

Book burning can be a holy act. Notice the following bible story.

Acts

019:011 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

019:012 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

019:013 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the LORD Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

019:014 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

019:015 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

019:016 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, So, that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

019:017 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

019:018 **And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.**

019:019 **Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men:
and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.**

019:020 **So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.**

So in this story, many people repented and turned their lives over to God, and burned their 'curious arts' books. And this was a holy act, part of their repentance and desire to live their lives for God. So, book burning itself is not bad. It can be a good and holy act depending on what kind of books are being burned.

Issues – Foster Care

Some children have no home because they are orphans or because they cannot stay with their parents for some reason. When this occurs, the state may find a home/family with whom they can stay. This is called foster care and the adults in the home are called foster parents. There are agencies which place these children into foster homes. The foster parents receive money from the government to take care of the foster children. The agency also receives money from the state for providing this service.

The principles for selecting a home for the children are basically the same for selecting a school for a child. This is discussed in the section entitled “Issues – Schools” and will not be repeated here.

In short, children, especially Christian children, must be placed into a Christian home. Once again, why is this important for children?

Proverbs

022:006 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Because this will influence them for their entire lives. And why is that important? As mentioned before, Christianity is about having a relationship with God. How we live affects our relationship with Him, just as how you live can affect one’s marriage. When the following passage speaks of walking in the light, it means living according to biblical principles.

Placing a Christian child in a home of atheists or gays may lead them astray, corrupting their morals or even causing them never to become born again believers. A born again Christian cannot lose their salvation (see the separate writeup on this). But they could become a prodigal son by living in an evil environment (see the story of Lot). And young children may have a knowledge of Christianity. But if they are placed in an evil environment, they may never become true born again believers, and become part of the ‘bad soil’ the Jesus spoke about in His parable of the sower below

Mark

- 004:001 And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, So, that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.
- 004:002 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,
- 004:003 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:
- 004:004 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.
- 004:005 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:
- 004:006 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.
- 004:007 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.
- 004:008 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.
- 004:009 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.
- 004:010 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.
- 004:011 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:
- 004:012 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.
- 004:013 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

004:014 The sower soweth the word.

004:015 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

004:016 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

004:017 And have no root in themselves, and So, endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

004:018 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

004:019 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

004:020 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

Most people who become believers do So, in their youth. Part of the reason is because people become set in their ways as they become older. And at a certain point in time, God may stop trying to bring someone to faith.

Isaiah

055:006 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

This is another reason why it is So, critical that Christian children be placed with good, conservative Christian families in foster care.

The bible also cautions us to seek God in one's youth.

Ecclesiasties

012:001 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

012:002 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

012:003 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

Issues – Gun Control

Obviously, the bible does not speak about guns because there were none when it was written. But are there any guiding principles in it?

But before talking about biblical principles, we maybe should ask ourselves why do people want guns? Some say they want them for sport. Most of the guns used for hunting are bolt action rifles with a small magazine, meaning they do not reload 'quickly' (depending on your definition of the word) and they only hold a few rounds. Some say they want them for home defense. For most people, a 6 shot revolver or a shot gun is adequate. But some other people want military style assault rifles because they fear the government. If you ask them 'why', they will point to countries like Venezuela which suffers under a dictator. Some say that the US is not like Venezuela and would never become a dictatorship. But others disagree pointing to attempts of some to limit freedom of speech and religion, and pointing to attempts to limit who can run for office.

People who oppose guns, especially assault rifles, point to mass shootings where the gunmen used assault rifles. They point to the lives lost and the lives shattered because of gun violence. They also point to countries where murders decreased when severe restrictions were made on gun ownership.

The following passage is sometimes used to justify gun ownership.

Luke

011:021 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

011:022 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

If one looks at the full context in which it is given, one realizes it is like a parable, and that 'strong man' refers to Satan and 'a stronger man' refers to Jesus.

But there is a principle in this verse that does apply to self-defense. It is that a person who is armed is better at protecting their home.

Another passage that is sometimes used to defend gun ownership is

Luke

022:035 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

022:036 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

022:037 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

022:038 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

In this passage, Jesus reminded His disciples that up to then they needed nothing because He was with them. Soon, He would be leaving them and they would need common means for provisions and protection, such as money and a sword for protection.

But the biggest problem leading to murders and mass shootings is the evil heart that is in the attacker. They have little if any empathy for their victims, which leads us back to their upbringing. What kind of parents did they have? What kind of neighborhood did they grow up in. And especially, what were they taught in school and what was the atmosphere like in that school? I bring this up because So, much of a child's waking moments are in school.

If schools taught morality, empathy for others, and yes, religion, then when the children grow up, they would be more caring people. There will always be people who have hardened hearts and will not respond. But how can you expect a seed to grow if you do not water it? How can you expect children to grow up into nice people if schools fail in this mission? As the bible says,

Proverbs

022:006 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

If a child is in a teacher's care for So, much of the day, then they are partly responsible for their upbringing.

Please read the section entitled Issues – Schools for more information.

Issues - Treatment of the Poor

There are many Bible passages which warn people/government not to afflict the poor. So, it is vital that government consider how laws will affect them and insure the laws will not afflict them.

Personally, I have heard politicians being deceptive and trying to sell an idea as being good for the country when in fact it was only good for a small group at the expense of everyone else. I think these verses speak against that.

These verses should be guidelines when considering legislation.

Exodus

022:022 Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.

022:023 If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry;

022:024 And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

022:025 If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.

022:026 If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down:

022:027 For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious.

Amos

004:001 Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, Bring, and let us drink.

004:002 The Lord GOD hath sworn by his holiness, that, lo, the days shall come upon you, that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fishhooks.

Amos

005:011 Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them.

005:012 For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.

Ezekiel

016:049 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

016:050 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.

Isaiah

010:001 Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;
010:002 To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows
may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!

Zechariah

007:009 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man
to his brother:
007:010 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil
against his brother in your heart.
007:011 But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.
007:012 Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the
LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of
hosts.
007:013 Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; So, they cried, and I would not hear,
saith the LORD of hosts:
007:014 But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate
after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.

Note: The term 'stranger' in the above passage refers to foreigners.

Micah (on evictions)

002:009 The women of my people have ye cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children have ye taken away
my glory for ever.
002:010 Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore
destruction.

Psalms

010:002 The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.
010:003 For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.

Proverbs

014:031 He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

Proverbs

022:016 He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.

Proverbs

028:027 He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

Proverbs

029:007 The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.

Proverbs

031:009 Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

Mark

012:038 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces,

012:039 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

012:040 Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

Even bread brought as a sacrifice should be given to the hungry if there is nothing else

1 Samuel

021:001 Then came David to Nob to Ahimelech the priest: and Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, Why art thou alone, and no man with thee?

021:002 And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed my servants to such and such a place.

021:003 Now therefore what is under thine hand? give me five loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is present.

021:004 And the priest answered David, and said, There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread; if the young men have kept themselves at least from women.

021:005 And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel.

021:006 So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away.

Issues – Be Kind to Foreigners

So how should a government treat foreigners (non-citizens) in a country? Well, the bible has several passages instructing the nation of Israel on how to treat them. Basically, they were instructed to treat foreigners with kindness and equally under the law. The same principle can apply to us today. Please note that in the following passages, the term 'stranger' refers to foreigners. Newer translations of the bible use the term 'foreigner'. Also note how some passages state they are to be treated with love. And some passages state not to oppress them.

Kindness

Exodus

022:021 Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Exodus

023:009 Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Zechariah

007:009 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

007:010 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

Leviticus

019:033 And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him.

019:034 But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy

010:017 For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

010:018 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

010:019 Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Deuteronomy

014:028 At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates:

014:029 And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

Deuteronomy

023:007 Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a stranger in his land.

Deuteronomy

024:014 Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates:

Jeremiah

007:001 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

007:002 Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.

007:003 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

007:004 Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these.

007:005 For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour;

007:006 If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt:

007:007 Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

Jeremiah

022:003 Thus saith the LORD; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.

Ezekiel

022:029 The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.

Zechariah

007:009 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

007:010 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

Malachi

003:005 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.

In the above passage, more modern translations indicate this means depriving foreigners of their rights/justice.

Welfare/Workfare

There is a separate section in this write up regarding welfare/workfare. However, it should be noted here that that principle applied to both citizens and foreigners in Israel when it was established.

Leviticus

019:009 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

019:010 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus

023:022 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus

025:035 And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

Deuteronomy

024:019 When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands.

024:020 When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

024:021 When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

024:022 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

Religious Laws

There are also bible passages instructing foreigners to observe certain religious laws in Israel. However, they are not quoted here because this writing is about governments in general – not that specific to Israel.

Equal Treatment Under the Law

See the section entitled “Issues – Equal Treatment Under The Law”.

Issues – Equal Treatment Under The Law

The following passages commanded the nation of Israel that the same laws were to apply to citizens and foreigners.

Leviticus

024:022 Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I am the LORD your God.

Numbers

015:015 One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, So, shall the stranger be before the LORD.

015:016 One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.

Deuteronomy

024:017 Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge:

Deuteronomy

027:019 Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.

Psalms

094:001 O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.

094:002 Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.

094:003 LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

094:004 How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?

094:005 They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.

094:006 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

The following example from Jesus's time also talks to this point.

John

008:003 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

008:004 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

008:005 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

008:006 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

008:007 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

008:008 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

008:009 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

008:010 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

008:011 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

In the above passage, Jesus stopped an execution by pricking the conscience of the accusers. What was Jesus writing on the ground? May be the names of her lovers? The men standing there ready to stone her? When these men left, there were no more accusers, no more witnesses. Since the Mosaic Law requires at least 2 witnesses for an execution, she could not be legally executed. This story has as much to do with equal treatment under the law as anything else.

Issues – National Debt

The following was the instruction God gave to the nation of Israel.

Deuteronomy

015:006 For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.

Issues – The Military and the Draft

This section only summarizes some of the basic principles, and does not go into great depth.

Necessity of an Army

Through out its history, the nation of Israel/Judea had an army. Originally, it was created to take over the land of Canaan which God had promised to them. Often, it was just a militia that was called up, and not a permanent army. In the following passage, God orders a census be taken to count/identify all the men eligible for service. Presumably, women were not included because warfare at that time required great strength.

Numbers

- 001:001 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,
- 001:002 Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names, every male by their polls;
- 001:003 From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies.

Important to be on God's Side

Psalms

- 144:001 Blessed be the LORD my strength which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight

Deuteronomy

- 020:001 When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the LORD thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.
- 020:002 And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak unto the people,
- 020:003 And shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them;
- 020:004 For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.

Exclude Some from the Draft

Notice the following reasons God gave to the nation of Israel why some were not to be drafted. Verses 5-7 describe when people will have their thoughts on home. Verse 8 states do not fight if afraid.

Deuteronomy

- 020:005 And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.
- 020:006 And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it? let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it.
- 020:007 And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.
- 020:008 And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart.

God Gives The Victory – Do Not Trust In Weapons

The following passage tell us it is God that gives a country victory.

Psalms

033:016 There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

033:017 An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.

033:018 Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

033:019 To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

033:020 Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.

033:021 For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

Sometimes God Uses Nations to Punish Others

Joshua

008:001 And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land:

008:002 And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.

Isaiah

010:005 O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

010:006 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

Issues - Disciplining Children

This section is included because government laws were expanded into this area. I have no children or any experience in this area. I believe parents need some flexibility in how they discipline children because each case is different.

General Discipline

Proverbs

013:024 He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

The following shows how serious disobedience could be

Deuteronomy

021:018 If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them:

021:019 Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place;

021:020 And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard.

021:021 And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: So, shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

However, the Bible also warns parents not to punish too severely.

Ephesians

006:004 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Proverbs

019:018 Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

019:019 A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if thou deliver him, yet thou must do it again.

The story of Eli, the high priest, sons illustrates how important it is that parents raise their children to believe in God and obey Him. In this story, we are told Eli's sons did not really believe in God and lived as they pleased. They brought dishonor to the high priest position. Notice that his sons stole parts of the sacrifice.

1 Samuel

002:012 Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD.

002:013 And the priest's custom with the people was, that, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand;

002:014 And he struck it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So, they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither.

002:015 Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.

002:016 And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force.

002:017 Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD: for men abhorred the offering of the LORD.

Notice another grave sin of Eli's sons

1 Samuel

002:022 Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

002:023 And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people.

002:024 Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD's people to transgress.

002:025 If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.

And finally the judgment. In the following passage, God gives Eli a message. In it, not only will his 2 evil sons die, but that Eli's lineage will end and will die in their prime. So, not only were the evil sons to die, but Eli would also be punished

1 Samuel

002:029 Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?

002:030 Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

002:031 Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house.

002:032 And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever.

002:033 And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age.

The following records the message passed to Eli announcing his 2 sons died in battle. Notice that Eli did not die because of the news of his sons, but because of the news of the Arch of the Covenant.

1 Samuel

004:016 And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to day out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son?

004:017 And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken.

004:018 And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

King David was indulgent of his children. The story in 2 Samuel 13 and 14 shows the consequences of it. In this story one son rapes a half-sister and another son kills the rapist because David did not apply the law. The story is long So, the entire text will not be included here. The story starts with King David's son Amnon wanted to sleep with his half sister

Tamar. So, he pretended to be sick and asked that Tamar give him food. When the opportunity presented itself, he grabbed her to rape her.

2 Samuel

013:011 And when she had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and said unto her, Come lie with me, my sister.

013:012 And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly.

013:013 And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? and as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee.

013:014 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her

Notice that in verse 13 Tamar asked Amnon to marry her because she believed King David would approve the marriage. But also note that marriage between an brother and sister was not allowed. So, if she thought her father would approve, that implies he was indulgent and would not enforce the law.

King David did learn of the rape.

2 Samuel

013:021 But when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth.

But he did nothing. He did not enforce the law. So, 2 years after the rape, Absalom, Tamar's full brother, planned a party and had Amnon killed at the party.

2 Samuel

013:028 Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant.

013:029 And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man gat him up upon his mule, and fled.

2 Samuel

014:024 And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face. So, Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face.

Proverbs

019:018 Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

Ephesians

006:001 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

006:002 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

006:003 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

006:004 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord

Proverbs

022:015 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

Proverbs

023:013 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

023:014 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

I do believe parents should have some flexibility on disciplining children. I do not advocate any type of discipline. I think the mildest form of discipline which gets results is best.

Gender Identity Training

At the time of this writing, it was reported in the news of a few couples who do not want to raise boys as boys, or girls as girls. They believe a child should decide how to live. But what does the bible teach? One interesting passage is when King David, near the end of his life, gives the following instructions to his son who will reign after him.

1 Kings

002:001 Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying,

002:002 I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man;

002:003 And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself:

002:004 That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

It has been suggested by at least one theologian that Solomon was raised by his mother and may not have acted as 'manly' as some. But in these verses, King David is giving instruction to his son, including one to act like a man.

The bible also teaches that men should not wear women's clothes and vice versa.

Deuteronomy

022:005 The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do So, are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

Now notice the following passage.

Deuteronomy

006:004 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

006:005 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

006:006 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

006:007 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

006:008 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

006:009 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

The point is, parents should raise children according to biblical principles, which include gender identity.

That does not mean Christians should force other parents to follow this principle. But similarly, it means others should not force Christians to raise their children without gender identity. This may not be an issue at this writing. But it seems

there is a trend to force Christians to compromise their beliefs, morals and principles to obey society morals. That is why this warning was written.

Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 1 – God’s Love

To understand the issue, it may be helpful to have a basic understanding of God’s love.

What does the Bible say about God’s love toward us? The following are some passages on the subject. Please read each word very, very carefully, because each word is important. Let’s start with one very familiar passage. It is one of Jesus’s teachings.

John

003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Most sermons on this passage discuss how we are saved by faith in Jesus. But notice the first 6 words. What is really meant by ‘God So, loved’? In the English language, the word love can mean many different things. For example, we sometimes say things like, “I love pizza”. What we really mean is we have a craving for it. We also sometimes say things like, “I love music”. What we really mean is we have a fondness of it. We also may say, “I love you mom” or “I love you dad” when we really mean we care deeply for them. And the word “love” is sometimes used to mean “sex”. But then there is also the phrase, “I’m in love with you” which denotes something much stronger. So, what is meant in John 3:16?

The following passage gives more insight. These are Jesus’s words.

John

015:012 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

015:013 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

So does this mean God has a great fondness towards us? I mean, many parents have sacrificed their lives for their children without being in love with them. So, could that be the meaning? Or is it more than that? Remember, Jesus gave His life for us So, we can be saved. So, how much was/is His love toward us? Well, look at the next passage. It is a commandment of God given to Moses.

Deuteronomy

006:004 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

006:005 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

If God asks this of us, does that mean we should just be fond of God and have a strong determination to be faithful to Him? Is that all it means? Well, Jesus quoted and expanded on that scripture.

Matthew

022:037 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

022:038 This is the first and great commandment.

022:039 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

022:040 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

So the love we have for God should be stronger than our love of self.

The following is an interesting story in the Bible. Notice the immense passion that Jesus had when it says He wept.

John

011:035 Jesus wept.

011:036 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

011:037 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

011:038 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

011:039 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

011:040 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

011:041 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

011:042 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

011:043 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

011:044 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

011:045 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

Notice the passion that Jesus had. So, could it be that Jesus was in love with that man? Could it be that God is passionately in love with each of us (not in a sexual way)?

The following passage may best summarize how Jesus feels toward us. Remember, He died for our sins.

John

015:013 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Well, if you ever were in love with someone, you probably noticed several changes in yourself. For one thing, you probably are always thinking about your loved one. And you probably would be scared to hurt their feelings. Now notice the following 2 passages.

1 Thessalonians

005:017 Pray without ceasing.

How can you pray constantly except that God is always on your mind? And why would that happen?

Notice the following passages.

Proverbs

009:010 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

Yes, we are to have great reverence to God as it says in the following passage

Hebrews

010:030 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again,
The Lord shall judge his people.

010:031 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

And notice the following passage.

Proverbs

008:013 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

But the passage in Proverbs also has another meaning too. If we are in love with Jesus/God, we will be afraid to hurt His feelings because we love Him So, much. That is the beginning of wisdom. To really know Jesus is to love Him. And we will turn away from the things He hates. You see, when you turn your heart and desires toward God, you will turn away from the things He hates – sin.

The following passages is a great sermon on love and God in the Bible.

1 John

004:007 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

004:008 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

1 John

004:009 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

004:010 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

004:011 Beloved, if God So, loved us, we ought also to love one another.

004:012 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

004:013 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

004:014 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

004:015 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

004:016 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

004:017 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, So, are we in this world.

004:018 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

004:019 We love him, because he first loved us.

004:020 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

004:021 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

005:001 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

005:002 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

005:003 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

005:004 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

005:005 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

005:006 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

005:007 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

005:008 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

005:009 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

005:010 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

005:011 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

005:012 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

005:013 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

Notice especially verse 4:12 above. How can we love all people? If we are in love with God, God's love flows thru us and we are one with Him. The following is part of a prayer of Jesus.

John

017:020 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

017:021 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

The reality is, many Christians not just simply believe God exists, but know it. They are more sure of His existence than the earth and air around them.

The following are words of Jesus.

Revelations

003:020 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

So since God is in love with each person in the world, then we born again believers, being in Him, share in that love of others. And ideally, we should have that same love for Jesus, or rather, God would put that love in us.

1 Corinthians

016:014 Let all your things be done with charity.

Modern translations use the word 'love' rather than 'charity'. The actual word in the original Greek can be translated either as 'charity' or 'love'.

And again

2 John

001:005 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

001:006 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

'It' in the above passage refers to love. So, what are the characteristics of love? A good definition is in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians

013:004 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

013:005 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

013:006 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

013:007 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

So why is this so important? The answer is in the following passages which speak of Jesus.

John

003:016 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

003:017 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

003:018 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John

003:036 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John

014:006 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Acts

004:012 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

1 John

005:011 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

005:012 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

Deuteronomy

004:029 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

Jeremiah

029:013 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Revelation

003:020 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

What Does It Mean To Believe?

Please note that there is a difference between head and heart faith. Some people only give mental assent to Jesus, like believing Abraham Lincoln lived a long time ago. But notice the following verse

Romans

010:009 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

010:010 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

2 Corinthians

005:017 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Matthew

007:021 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

007:022 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

007:023 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

John

003:001 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

003:002 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

003:003 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

003:004 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

003:005 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

003:006 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

003:007 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

003:008 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: So, is every one that is born of the Spirit.

003:009 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

003:010 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

- 003:011 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.
- 003:012 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?
- 003:013 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.
- 003:014 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even So, must the Son of man be lifted up:
- 003:015 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.
- 003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
- 003:017 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.
- 003:018 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
- 003:019 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.
- 003:020 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.
- 003:021 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 2 - Christians

Before talking about acceptance, tolerance and discrimination, it is important to give some general background on Christians.

So Who Is A Child Of God?

According to the bible, not everyone is a 'child of God'. For example, note the bible passage below where Jesus called the Pharisees.

John

008:042 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

008:043 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

008:044 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Did you notice in the above passage that Jesus said, "If God were your Father, ye would love me"? The implication is that people who are 'children of God' will love Jesus. But this is not the only passage which mentions this. Notice in the following passages in which says something similar.

1 John 3

003:010 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

1 John

003:001 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

The following passage expands on this. Notice that it says, "to become the sons of God". So, people are not born sons/children of God. Instead they become sons/children of God.

John

001:012 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

001:013 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Galations

004:003 Even So, we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

004:004 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

004:005 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

So how do people become 'children of God'? By "them that believe on his name". The following passage provide additional insight and support of this.

John

003:003 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

003:004 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

003:005 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

003:006 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

003:007 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

003:008 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: So, is every one that is born of the Spirit.

003:009 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

003:010 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

003:011 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

003:012 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

003:013 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

003:014 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even So, must the Son of man be lifted up:

003:015 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

003:017 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

003:018 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God

First, know that God loves (or is in love) with each of us. Second, to find Him, you must seek Him and believe in Him with your heart/soul/spirit. The following passages summarize this.

John

003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Deuteronomy

004:029 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

Romans

010:008 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

010:009 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

010:010 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Jeremiah

029:012 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

029:013 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

And finally,

2 John

001:009 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

001:010 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

001:011 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

So not all people who believe they are children of God are. Not all people who think they are Christians are real Christians. I have heard it said that even in the best churches, at most 50% are real Christians. Many give mental assent to Jesus but never believed with/in their heart. And there are many ministers who are not born-again believers. The bible even gives people admonitions on this, warning that each of us should examine ourselves to see if we truly believe.

2 Corinthians

013:005 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Matthew

007:022 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

007:023 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Romans

008:014 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

008:015 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

008:016 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

1 John

005:010 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

005:011 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

005:012 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

So, what keeps a nominal Christian from becoming a born-again Christian? Often it is sin. Turning to God means turning away from sin and desiring what God wants. If you seek God with all your heart, you will want the things He wants, and live a life according to His will.

One well known Christian teacher/minister was onetime asked how he could tell if someone was a real Christian. He said he did not know who in his congregation was a real Christian and who simply was a member for other reasons. He said the people seemed to be walking down a two lane road – one lane going towards a sinful life and the other lane going to a godly life. He added that people seem to walk back and forth down that road, So, it is hard knowing their true faith/character. He also said that people who study the bible are the only ones he felt confident were Christians because non-Christians tend to stay away from it. But notice that this did not exclude non-bible studiers from being Christians. And this was his observations only.

'In' Christ

Ephesians

002:008 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

002:009 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

When we turn our hearts/desires to Christ, we also turn from sin. When we ask Christ into our lives, spirits, we are born again. The following is part of a prayer that Jesus spoke.

John

017:021 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

John

014:016 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

014:017 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

014:018 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

014:019 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

014:020 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

The following is another quote of Jesus

Revelation

003:020 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

The following is an analogy that Jesus gave.

John

015:005 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

015:006 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

015:007 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

015:008 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; So, shall ye be my disciples.

015:009 As the Father hath loved me, So, have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

015:010 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

015:011 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

015:012 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

015:013 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Notice the following passage.

John

010:025 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

010:026 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

010:027 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

God can and does make Himself real to many Christians, making Himself more real to them than the air they breathe or the earth they walk on. And He confirms in their hearts that the Bible is real and trustworthy. Not all Christians have that experience. But many do. As the bible says

Romans

008:014 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

008:015 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

008:016 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

So what does it mean to be 'in' Christ? Notice the above verse uses the term 'our spirit'. People are more than a physical body. We each have a spirit which lives in a body. It is our spirit that can be 'in' Christ, that is, have a special union or communion with Him. Teaching about the physical and spiritual parts of people is beyond the scope of this study and could become very voluminous. But one interesting verse is below.

1 Thessalonians

005:023 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Church Relation to Non-Members

There has been a lot of talk about what the church's relationship should be to the gay community. And there has been a lot of criticism of Christians for their attitudes towards the gay community. But what does the Bible have to say about it?

During Jesus's ministry on earth, there was a group call Pharisees which obeyed the Mosaic Law very closely. They noted that Jesus visited some of the most sinful people in society as recorded in the following bible passage.

Luke

015:001 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

015:002 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

015:003 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

015:004 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

015:005 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

015:006 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

015:007 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

And a little farther down, Jesus says...

Luke

015:010 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

There are several important lessons from this. One is that Jesus reached out to the 'sinners' of society. Notice that Jesus was not accused of participating in the sinful life styles of others. And Jesus was not accused of accepting their life style. Instead, He reached out in an effort to bring them towards God and repentance.

This is not about acceptance of sin. This is not about participating in sinful acts. It is about reaching out in love, and leading those who have a desire for God to Jesus and repentance. We, as Christians, should be the same for any of our own who fall into a sinful life style. And we, as Christians, should also reach out to others who desire a relationship with God, teaching the gospel. This leads to repentance, if they have a desire for God.

One could write a book on this topic alone. But in summary, not all people have a heart and desire for God. But some do.

We Are All Sinful / Disobedient to God

Isaiah

053:006 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Romans

003:023 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Each of us has sinful desires. For some it is gossip, others it is pride, adultery, fornication, gluttony, greed, lack of charity, etc. It is easy to criticize others. But we need to examine ourselves and try living as God desires. As Jesus said,

John

014:015 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

Before going into what the bible teaches on gay life styles, it is important to remember that we all are sinners. So, why focus on gay life styles in particular? It is because this paper discusses biblical teaching on today's issues and government policies. Gay life styles are a major issue today. Not that it is any worse of a sin than others. God has judged nations for many different reasons/sins. But today, people and government are trying to force acceptance of lifestyles which the bible says is sin. And thru this acceptance, government is trying to force Christians to do what they believe is sinful, such as providing services for gay weddings, dressing with 'transgender' people of the opposite sex in school locker rooms, and the like.

Parables of the Prodigal Son and the Prodigal Pig

But before going into those topics, it is important to remember that not all people who call themselves 'Christian' really are Christian. One minister noted that his members seemed to go back and forth down a road to sin and back to a good life. So, he was unsure as to which members were true believers. But one way to tell is where to they end up. In the bible, Jesus taught a parable about a prodigal son. And Peter told about a prodigal pig.

The following is the story of the prodigal son.

Luke

015:011 And he said, A certain man had two sons:

015:012 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

015:013 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

015:014 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

015:015 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

015:016 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

015:017 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

015:018 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

015:019 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

015:020 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

015:021 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

015:022 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

015:023 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

015:024 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

015:025 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

015:026 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

015:027 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

015:028 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

015:029 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

015:030 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

015:031 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

015:032 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

The point is, the son could never be happy living in a foreign land with pigs. So, he returned to his father. That is true of Christians. They can get into a sinful lifestyle. But they cannot be happy forever living in a sinful lifestyle. They eventually will repent and return to God. In some cases, God will remove them (they die) So, they will not continue in sin.

This can be contrasted with the brief story of the prodigal pig told by Peter.

2 Peter

002:019 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

002:020 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

002:021 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

002:022 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

This passage in second Peter describes people who are given over to earthly pleasures. They may learn of God and may for a time live good lives. But they never fully believe, never repent, never fully commit themselves to God, never are 'born again'. They never became 'a son of God'. And they eventually will return to their sinful lifestyle, just like a pig prefers life in a pig pen.

And that is a danger with trying to cherry pick bible verses to fit a belief. When someone tries justifying something by selecting only some bible verses or by taking them out of context, it is usually done to try to justify a sinful act. It is an indication that person may not be a true Christian. The following are some warnings.

Romans

010:001 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

010:002 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

010:003 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

010:004 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

2 Timothy

003:001 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

003:002 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

003:003 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

003:004 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

003:005 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

003:006 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

003:007 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Romans

008:005 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

008:006 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

008:007 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

008:008 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Jude

001:004 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude

001:016 These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

001:017 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

001:018 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

001:019 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

Judging Others and Ourselves

There are several important teachings on judging people. First, it is important to examine ourselves to see if we truly believe in Jesus as described earlier.

2 Corinthians

013:005 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Secondly, the bible also teaches that when a Christian has a sinful lifestyle, they should be avoided. The following is one bible passage. This is discussed more in the section talking about excommunication.

2 Thessalonians 3

003:006 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

Thirdly, Jesus taught that we should not judge. But what exactly did He say and mean?

Matthew

007:001 Judge not, that ye be not judged.

007:002 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

007:003 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

007:004 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

007:005 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Notice that He was talking about judging people. He was not talking about making judgments about what is sinful. What is sinful is described in the bible. So, what exactly did He mean in these verses? Did He mean

1. Not to be harsh in criticism?
2. Do not gossip? Sometimes people can be very critical about things that do not matter.
3. Do not criticize actions which are not described in the bible? For example, should people not criticize others who smoke or eat unhealthy food or ...?
4. Do not criticize people when you do not understand the motives for their actions? Sometimes we do not understand why someone is acting as they do until we are in that situation.
5. Be kind to people?
6. Until you are born again and have a close personal relationship with Him, you are in no position to judge? And even once you are in that position, you deal kindly with people?

I am not sure of the exact meaning. It could be a combination of them.

The next verse is for Christians.

Matthew

007:006 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

There are times when people are open to listening about the bible's teaching. And there are times when people are hostile to it. This passage is saying not to teach or testify when people are hostile because they will only mock you and perhaps turn on (attack) you.

Hungry? Thirsty?

So what does it mean to desire God and turn to Him? Not everyone desires God. But there are people who believe there is a supreme being and want to know Him. Others have a fear of death and that can lead them to have a desire to know God. Others see futility in life and that can lead them to God. Others feel guilt and that can lead them to God.

So what does it mean to turn towards God? One analogy is this. Imagine a room with God on one side and all the sinful pleasures of the world on the other. Imagine a person in the middle of the room. If they turn toward God, they turn their backs on the sinful pleasures.

Desiring God is like a hunger or thirst that people have.

Matthew

005:006 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

John

006:035 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Not everyone has or will desire God and His ways. This was explained by Jesus in a parable.

Mark

004:002 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

004:003 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

004:004 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

004:005 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

004:006 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

004:007 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

004:008 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

004:009 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

004:010 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

004:011 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

004:012 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

004:013 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

004:014 The sower soweth the word.

004:015 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

004:016 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

004:017 And have no root in themselves, and So, endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

004:018 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

004:019 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

004:020 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

This should also be a warning to us. What kind of soil are we? There is only 1 kind of good soil. If we are not that, we should seek to be that good soil. Otherwise, we are lost for all eternity.

There are several ways that Satan can take away the word that was sown. One is by listening to people who mock God and faith in Him. Another is to listen to false teachers or teachers of other religions.

And what is stony ground? These are people who hear God's word (bible teaching), it is in their head but not their heart, and they never quite turn to God. Instead, they reject it when they see persecution. One example of this is how So, called Christian communities turned/converted to Islam when the Islamic armies of the 7th and 8th centuries swept thru North Africa and the Middle East.

And what is the thorny ground? These are people who hear God's word but it is in their head and not their hearts, So, they never quite turn to God. Instead, they may acknowledge that there is a god, but they turn away from God and turn towards sin. One example of this is a large proportion of people in the US. They hear about Christianity and may accept it as truth. But they never seek a close relationship to God because they desire the things of this earth. They see Christianity as a ritual or a 'get out of jail free' card without any further commitment. As mentioned before, one analogy is a room with God on one side and all sinful pleasures on the other side. People have a choice of either turning to God or to a life filled with earthly pleasures.

Turning to God is not about following rituals. And although leading a good life may lead to a reward in heaven, it is thru faith and not what we do that brings

John

004:024 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Luke

018:009 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

018:010 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

018:011 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

018:012 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

018:013 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up So, much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

018:014 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

But if we turn to God, we will want to live a life pleasing to Him.

James

002:017 Even So, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

002:018 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

002:019 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

Even when we turn to God, we still have a sinful nature. Or more precisely, we have a dual nature. Our bodies still crave things which are against God's will. But our heart/spirit desires what pleases God.

Romans

007:019 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

007:020 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Romans

008:008 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

008:009 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if So, be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

008:010 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

008:011 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

008:012 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

008:013 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

008:014 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

So the question is, are you thirsty?

John

007:037 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

007:038 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

007:039 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 3 - The Christian Life

Many people believe religion is simply a matter of belief in a god and performing certain rituals. While that may be true for some religions, Christianity is different. Christianity is a belief in one true God. Christianity is a relationship with God where people being 'born again' have an intimate relationship with God. It is also about living what is called 'the Christian life' where Christians seek to do what is pleasing to God, rather than for themselves. Try thinking of it this way. When a couple is in love, they do things to try to please their spouse rather than themselves. That builds stronger bonds between them. Living for oneself weakens that relationship. That is similar to the relationship between Christians and God. I know many will not believe this, especially atheists. But that is, in short, what Christianity is about.

1 John

001:006 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

001:007 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

So the First Amendment to the US Constitution protects not just Christians' belief in God, but also their right to practice their religion – ie, live according to God's will.

So Christians should be tolerated just like any other group by the government and society. That includes letting them avoid things which they believe are sinful.

The following bible verses talk about living the Christian life.

Notice in John 10:27 Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice". Born again Christians with a strong relationship to Him can feel in their hearts what is right. The term 'the flesh' refers to your human, bodily/selfish desires/urges.

John

010:025 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

010:026 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

010:027 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

John

016:013 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Romans

008:001 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

008:002 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

008:003 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

008:004 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

008:005 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

008:006 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

008:007 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

008:008 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

008:009 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if So, be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

008:010 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

008:011 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

008:012 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

008:013 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

008:014 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Romans

014:012 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

014:013 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

014:014 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

014:015 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

Romans

014:022 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

014:023 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Romans

013:014 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

As discussed in another section of this write-up, Christians are to obey the government. However, there are limitations as illustrated in the passage below.

Acts

005:029 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 4 – Heart of the Matter

Forcing Christians To Accept

In recent years, there has been more acceptance in society of ungodly behavior. In some cases, people who reject calls for gay marriage and the like have been called Homophobic implying that person is a bigot or has unreasonable fear of gays.

But the Bible offers a different perspective. Godly people (those who truly believe in God and love Him) feel vexed by ungodly behavior. They may be tolerant, but they cannot like it. It has nothing to do with bigotry or fear unless by those terms one means they are vexed by ungodly acts.

2 Peter

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

Lot was a godly man living in an ungodly city. It affected his behavior so much, that when one reads the Bible story, one questions if he was a good person. But he believed in God. And it affected how he felt living in there.

There is a difference between tolerance and acceptance. Christians may tolerate sinful behaviour but not accept it. The point is, *non-Christians need to understand and tolerate Christian attitudes just as Christians are expected to understand and tolerate gays.*

In 2013, there were several cases where state governments tried forcing bakeries owned by Christians to make wedding cakes for gay couples. Doing so, would force the bakeries to show acceptance of gay marriage. *Many Christians view providing services for gay weddings as a sin.* A person may disagree with that view. But that is not relevant. The important point is that it is their beliefs. This violated their beliefs, and their freedom of religion.

To Christians who disagree and believe this is not sinful, remember what Paul wrote in Romans 14.

Romans

014:014 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

Romans 14 talks about whether eating meat is sinful. It is not talking about service to weddings. But the principle remains the same.

Romans

014:023 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

To non-Christians, remember what the First Amendment states,

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

There are no restrictions on freedom of religion. (Also note that nothing is said about separation of church and state. It only says that the government cannot make any laws regarding religion or its practice.)

However, people often reject and do not tolerate godly people. The story of Jeremiah is an example of how one's own people can be more cruel to a godly person than an enemy (the Babylonians).

Jeremiah

015:010 Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me.

Jeremiah

032:001 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar.

032:002 For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah's house.

032:003 For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it;

The following verse states Christians should be separated from people with poor morals.

2 Timothy

003:001 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

003:002 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

003:003 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

003:004 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

003:005 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

And the bible says if we live sinful lives, we can lose our fellowship with God (but not our salvation).

1 John 1

001:006 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

001:007 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

The Bible also states that one should not be quarrelsome with those who disagree.

2 Timothy

002:022 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

002:023 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

002:024 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

002:025 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

002:026 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

The point is, Christians live in an immoral world and they need to be tolerant of people. But that does not mean they must accept the actions of worldly people or to socialize with them or provide support in their ungodly endeavors. In fact, the Bible teaches that Christians should pray to God that they may live 'life in all godliness'. Or in other words, pray that governments do not force them to sin, and live without persecution.

1 Timothy

002:001 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

002:002 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

And Christians should separate themselves from those who live in sin. Of course everyone sins. But I believe the thought here is that there are some who knowing live a sinful life, without regret or repentance.

Psalms

001:001 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2 Thessalonians

03:006 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

2 Thessalonians

003:014 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

003:015 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Romans

16:017 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

So why do they follow a contrary doctrine?

2 Thessalonians

002:009 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

002:010 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

002:011 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

002:012 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Some other passages of interest are below.

1 Corinthians

005:011 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

2 John

001:010 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

001:011 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

This does not mean to sit in judgement. God knows who belong to him. It simply means do not have fellowship with them. The first passage talks about people who claim to be Christians and live in sin. The second passage refers to those who preach a different doctrine.

So, there are several reasons for not associating with someone. The bible teaches that bad company corrupts good character. This bad company can be anyone. The reasoning is that this can distort our judgement like it did for Lot. Another reason is to bring conviction to a Christian who has adopted a sinful lifestyle. Another reason is to avoid teachers of other religions who are enemies of God.

There are Christians who believe it is best to continue associating with gays in the hope they will turn toward God. Personally, I feel limited association is OK So, long as one's sexual orientation is not obvious or an issue.

Warning To Governments and People Who Force People to Sin

The following passage is in reference to people who keep children from coming to a saving faith/relationship with God. But there is a general principle here too. Woe to a person who tries forcing someone into sin.

Matthew

018:001 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

018:002 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

018:003 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

018:004 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

018:005 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

018:006 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

018:007 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 5 - Give None Offense

It can be difficult to talk with those who oppose Christian values and morality. Those who oppose them often speak in hateful words, not allowing those of opposing views to even speak. And they often use mocking terms (name calling) to those with different views. It is very tempting to respond in like manor. And unfortunately, many Christians do that on occasion. It can be So, tempting to preach about hell fire and damnation without teaching the love of God. It can be So, easy to respond hatefully when one receives So, much hate from non-believers. However, notice what the Bible says.

1 Corinthians

010:032 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

010:033 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

2 Thessalonians

003:014 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

003:015 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Notice that the last 4 words, “that they may be saved”. The reason for not giving offense is spread the Gospel, to save those people. It does not mean backing down from biblical teaching.

Yes, Jesus had dinner with ‘sinners’. He did this to draw them to Him, So, they could be saved. He did not participate in their deeds.

Mark

002:013 And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

002:014 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

002:015 And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

002:016 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

002:017 When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

The apostle Paul acted in a similar fashion. In the following passage, the apostle Paul says he adopts the customs of the people he is with in order to win as many as possible for Christ. This is another form of ‘not giving offense’. But once again, it does not mean backing down from biblical teaching. It does not mean committing sin. It does mean trying to preach the gospel in a way where people will actually listen and be receptive.

1 Corinthians

009:019 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

009:020 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

009:021 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

009:022 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

009:023 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

But we also must be wise not to speak when the occasion calls for it. There are people who will not listen, and even become aggressive when they hear biblical teaching. As the bible says

Matthew

007:006 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

I believe this means when people are not receptive to biblical teaching, don't push it. But there is a grey area here. It seems to me that if one converses about politics, one can say they believe in biblical teaching without getting into details, and getting 'preachy'. So, much depends on how receptive the other person is.

For example, there were a few cases where members of a church lined part of a funeral route and held posters saying the deceased was a terrible person and went to hell. Was that message offensive? Was that an appropriate time and place to give that kind of message? Some actions have a very negative impact on giving out the Gospel and simply brings shame. So, one must be careful and act out of godly love

1 Corinthians

016:014 Let all your things be done with charity.

More modern translations use the word 'love' rather than 'charity'.

There is persecution of Christians by others and government. The bible warns us that we should not lash out when we face those situations. The following are some passages related to this. This does not mean Christians should engage in the evil of this world in order to fit in. But it does mean we should act out of love to bring glory to God. Act as if God were standing beside us, watching us.

Romans

012:014 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

Romans

12:017 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

012:019 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

012:020 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in So, doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

012:021 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

The point is, if we are filled with God's love, we will love all others too. We may hate sin, but still love the sinner.

1 John

004:020 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

004:021 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

I'll use the following passage to wrap up the topic.

Ephesians

005:001 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

005:002 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

005:003 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

005:004 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

005:005 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

005:006 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

005:007 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

005:008 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

005:009 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

005:010 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

005:011 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

005:012 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

005:013 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

Philippians

002:001 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

002:002 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

002:003 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

In summary, we should live according to what God wants and do all in love.

The following is opinion.

Remember how Jesus taught. He was gentle, although He sometimes scolded the Pharisees when they verbally tried to trap or criticize Him. Living a godly life will probably have a bigger effect on those around us than lots of preaching, which often turns people off. Teaching is good when people are receptive.

I don't know of any all encompassing rule about when to associate with gays and when not to. But it seems best to avoid TV programs and movies that show immoral life styles as being good and acceptable. It seems best to avoid social situations where it is clear the people are living in open sin. Watching such shows, and associating with people in a sinful atmosphere can corrupt one's morals, like what happened to Lot's family. It seems OK to associate with people who live in sin So, long as that sin is not an issue in the setting – like at work or family gatherings. It seems best to avoid gay weddings and liberal churches, or going to parties when people are 'acting gay'. It seems best to be gentle, not preaching unless invited. One's life probably teaches/preaches more than any words we speak.

But this does not mean we should be all accepting. People can be welcomed to church. But the church should not abandon biblical teaching to be socially acceptable, and should not accept social gatherings which promote lifestyles which are not biblical.

1 Timothy

003:005 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

003:006 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

003:007 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

It seems to me, Christians should be nice, pleasant to all at work and other public places. I believe being negative and 'preachy' is divisive and drives people away in those environments. However, outside of these places, it also seems best to me to avoid people who live in open sin. That is, don't invite people living in open sin to one's home and turn down invitations to their homes. This includes avoiding TV shows and movies which promote or make sinful lifestyles appear acceptable. Do not make friends of such people. Tollerate but do not accept. We should remember the story of Lot.

Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 6 -Blame

Ezekiel

018:001 The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,

018:002 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

018:003 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.

018:004 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

018:005 But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right,

018:006 And hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman,

018:007 And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment;

018:008 He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man,

018:009 **Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD.**

018:010 If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that doeth the like to any one of these things,

018:011 And that doeth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife,

018:012 Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination,

018:013 Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; **he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.**

018:014 Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like,

018:015 That hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife,

018:016 Neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment,

018:017 That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live.

018:018 As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity.

018:019 Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? **When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.**

018:020 **The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.**

018:021 But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

- 018:022 All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.
- 018:023 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?
- 018:024 But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.
- 018:025 **Yet ye say, The way of the LORD is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?**
- 018:026 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.
- 018:027 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.
- 018:028 Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.
- 018:029 Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the LORD is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?
- 018:030 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.
- 018:031 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?
- 018:032 **For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye**

The point is, the children are not responsible for the sins of their parents. So, what does this teach of slave reparations that happened more than 150 years ago?

Issues – Obey God Rather Than Man

The bible teaches that everyone should obey government. There are several passages on this and they were discussed earlier in another section. But for completeness on this topic, one of those passages is repeated below.

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

013:005 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

013:006 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

013:007 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

013:008 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

013:009 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

013:010 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Now notice the following passage in which Jesus tells us to render to God the things that are God's. Normally this is not an issue. But there can be times when government can wrongly demand things we owe to God.

Mark

012:013 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words.

012:014 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?

012:015 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it.

012:016 And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's.

012:017 And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

And what are those things we owe to God? One of those things is to preach the gospel to all nations as Jesus said in the following passage.

Mark

016:015 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

And again in

John

028:018 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

028:019 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

028:020 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Not only are Christians to spread the gospel, but also to 'observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you'.

There are times when government may try commanding people to do something which they believe is sinful. An example of this is when King Nebuchadnezzar ordered people to worship a golden statue. The following is the story.

Daniel

003:001 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

003:002 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

003:003 Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

003:004 Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,

003:005 That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:

003:006 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

003:007 Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

003:008 Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews.

003:009 They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever.

003:010 Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

003:011 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

003:012 There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

003:013 Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.

003:014 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

003:015 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

003:016 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

- 003:017 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.
- 003:018 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.
- 003:019 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.
- 003:020 And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.
- 003:021 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.
- 003:022 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flames of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
- 003:023 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.
- 003:024 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.
- 003:025 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.
- 003:026 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire.
- 003:027 And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.
- 003:028 Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.
- 003:029 Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.
- 003:030 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon

And even today, just like in Babylonian times, governments sometime try forcing people to do things they believe are sinful. There is an underlining principle/doctrine/command that covers this.

Acts

- 005:026 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.
- 005:027 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,
- 005:028 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.
- 005:029 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, **We ought to obey God rather than men.**

This principle applies to families as well as government. Notice the commandment regarding obeying one's parents as it is written in the Old Testament.

Exodus

020:012 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Now notice how it is written in the New Testament.

Ephesians

006:001 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

006:002 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

006:003 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

006:004 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Notice the words 'in the Lord'. The point is, children are to obey their parents. But if the parents order them to do something sinful, they are not to obey.

So, the principle applies both to obeying parents and the government – obey but not when it would force us to do something sinful.

And what is sinful? The following passage talks about food, where some people believe certain diets were sinful. It ends with a general principle.

Romans

014:020 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

014:021 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

014:022 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

014:023 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Issues – Discrimination / Favoritism / Racism

Discrimination is a rather broad topic because there are several different kinds of discrimination. For example, there is racial discrimination, sex discrimination, social status discrimination, and behavior discrimination. And there may be other types too.

In our society, some forms of discrimination are condemned while others are accepted. And many people who say all forms of discrimination are wrong, actually favor some. For example, racial discrimination is condemned. On the other hand, some restaurants discriminate against some by posting signs which read, “No shirt, no shoes, no service”. Some social groups will not associate with people who have different political views. And many universities use race as a factor in deciding who is admitted. Even President Obama endorsed that type of discrimination. So, even in our society, some forms of discrimination are accepted while others are condemned. Some of society’s discrimination practices are codified into morality laws. (Most morality laws are a form of discrimination.) Others are simply common social practices.

So what is the Biblical teaching on discrimination? While the Bible does condemn many types of discrimination, it does some types of discrimination.

Racial Discrimination

The Bible teaches that God does not discriminate among different races, and neither should we.

Deuteronomy

010:017 For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

Acts

010:034 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

Romans

002:011 For there is no respect of persons with God.

Romans

010:012 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

010:013 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Colossians

003:010 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

003:011 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

Colosians

003:025 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

Galations

003:026 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

003:027 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

003:028 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

003:029 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

James

002:009 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

Philippians

002:003 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Remember, some day, those who are saved (go to heaven) will appear before Christ who will determine who will receive a special reward in heaven. We do not know the detailed lives of others. They very well may receive a far greater reward than ourselves. Even a very poor person on earth may receive a greater reward than the wealthiest on earth depending on what they did on earth. Remember the story of the widow's mite? The story is

Mark

012:041 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

012:042 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

012:043 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

012:044 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

Also, a person, even a very poor person, may have done more according to God's will for them than a very wealthy person. Each of us has certain gifts and talents. How faithful are we in using them according to God's will for us?

So how is this (racial discrimination) an issue for governments or citizens? It can affect laws in several different ways. For example,

Deuteronomy

010:017 For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

010:018 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

010:019 Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt

In the following passage, the term 'old man' refers to the nature we are born with. The term 'new man' refers to the nature we have once we have been born again with godly desires. So, all who are born again see, or should recognize, there are no differences between us, and all who are born again have Christ in them.

Colossians

003:009 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

003:010 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

003:011 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

In the above, the word stranger was used to mean foreigner.

Acts 10:28 is sometimes used as an argument that no one should be called impure or unclean. But as you can see from the context, this was in relation to race (Peter being a Jew and the centurion being a Roman).

Acts 10

010:009 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:

010:010 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,

010:011 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending upon him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:

010:012 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

010:013 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

010:014 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

010:015 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

010:016 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

010:017 Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,

010:018 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

010:019 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.

010:020 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

010:021 Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?

010:022 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.

010:023 Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

010:024 And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and he had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

010:025 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.

010:026 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

010:027 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

010:028 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

010:029 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

And it continues...

Acts

010:034 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

010:035 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

But perhapes the best Bible teaching on this subject is Jesus's story of the Good Samaritan. At that time, the Jews had low regard of Samaritans.

Luke 10

010:025 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

010:026 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

010:027 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

010:028 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

010:029 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

010:030 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

010:031 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

010:032 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

010:033 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

010:034 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

010:035 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

010:036 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

010:037 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

So as you can see, Jesus is saying we should be good to all, regardless of race.

Social Discrimination

The Bible teaches we should not discriminate among people with different social statuses.

James

002:001 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

002:002 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

002:003 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

002:004 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

002:005 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

002:006 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

002:007 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

002:008 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

002:009 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

002:010 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

002:011 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

002:012 So speak ye, and So, do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

002:013 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

Behavioral Discrimination

Although the Bible condemns racial discrimination, it does state Christians should discriminate in some cases based on how one behaves. For example, it teaches we should have nothing to do with false teachers. And it teaches we should not participate in acts of ungodly people,

The following verses state we should have nothing to do with false teachers.

2 John

001:009 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

001:010 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

001:011 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

The following verses state we should not participate in acts of ungodly people.

Ephesians 5

005:005 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

005:006 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

005:007 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

005:008 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

005:009 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

005:010 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

005:011 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

This is one reason why Christians must not participate in gay weddings. The Bible condemns homosexuality. Gay marriage is therefore something unholy. Note, the above passage relates to all unholy acts.

Besides being sinful, living in a corrupt culture can corrupt a good person's judgments and character.

1 Corinthians 15

015:033 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

A good example of this is the story of Lot which was covered in another section of this write-up. In summary, the Bible states he was a righteous man, meaning he had a saving faith in God. However, his life was corrupted by where he lived. And some of his actions were not godly. He chose to live in Sodom, a very wicked city. When 2 strangers stayed with him, people of Sodom demanded he send them out So, they could 'know' them – meaning they wanted to rape them.

Lot instead offered his daughters. What kind of father would do that? Later, after Lot's family fled Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot got drunk and his daughters slept with him because they wanted children. What kind of people do that? The point is, living among the people of Sodom and Gomorrah had a tragic effect on the morals of Lot and his family.

The following is another warning about whom we should associate – once again, another form of discrimination.

Proverbs

022:024 Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:

022:025 Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.

2 Thessalonians

003:014 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

003:015 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

The following passage teaches a Christian should not marry a non-believer (another form of discrimination) or other type of partnership.

2 Corinthians 6

006:014 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

006:015 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

006:016 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

006:017 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

The following verse states Christians should be separated from people with poor morals. This can apply to public schools where children from immoral families may be attending.

2 Timothy

003:001 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

003:002 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

003:003 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

003:004 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

003:005 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Discrimination Against Non-Believers

In the following passage, Christians are told to have nothing to do with (do not associate with) believers living unrepentantly in sin. However, this admonition does not apply to non-believers living in unrepentant sin.

1 Corinthians 5

005:009 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:

005:010 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

005:011 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

005:012 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

005:013 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person

Discrimination Against Believers - Excommunication

All people sin and do things which are against God's will. God tells us to repent, lest we be judged by Him. But there are some Christians who live sinful lives and do not repent. God says we should withdraw from them (avoid, have nothing to do with them). And Jesus stated the procedure to be followed.

2 Thessalonians

003:006 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

2 Thessalonians

003:013 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

003:014 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

003:015 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

1 Corinthians

005:011 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

005:012 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

005:013 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

Ephesians

005:011 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

005:012 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

Matthew 18

018:015 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

018:016 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

018:017 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

This is called excommunication. Today, churches rarely practice it and only do so, for the most extreme sins.

There are several reasons why this is done.

First, this can encourage a person to repent.

Second, gross sin by a Christian brings dishonor to God. When people of a religion live bad lives, others mock them, their beliefs, and their god. Christians are not to bring dishonor to God.

Third, “bad company corrupts good character”. The story of Lot in the Bible is a good example of this. Lot chose to live in Sodom, which was a very corrupt city, with his family. As mentioned in more detail before, living there corrupted his judgment, corrupted his daughter’s morals, and he eventually lost his wife thru her unbelief in God. Even in our own society, we see how people who have bad friends often start behaving badly.

And fourth, which is similar to the third, as the character of church members change, they often reject Biblical teachings which call their actions sinful. As the saying goes, “Either the bible will keep you from sinning, or sin will keep you from the bible”.

Issues – Inclusion

This issue has been touched on before in several sections, especially in the sections entitled

Issues – Discrimination / Favoritism / Racism

Issues – Schools

Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 5 – Give None Offense

The reader is encouraged to read those sections again about what they say about inclusion/discrimination. They cover this topic in greater detail than this section.

But it is good to summarize what the bible has to say about it.

The term ‘inclusion’ in today’s society means that all people are accepted. No one is to be scorned or rejected for physical traits or for personal lifestyle choices. Everyone is to feel welcomed and accepted. The only exceptions might be those engaging in criminal activity.

The bible teaches people should not discriminate or show favoritism based on race or wealth. But it also teaches that we should not partake in the evil deeds of others and warns us that bad company corrupts good people. So, we should avoid those that lead godless lifestyles. However, that does not give us license/freedom to mock/criticize the godless. We should be respectful and kind to people. But that does not mean we should invite them into our homes or social outings.

Children are to be raised in a godly environment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year. They are to be taught God’s morals, not worldly morals. And this is the problem with public schools. They teach worldly morals and, in the name of inclusion, teach that gay lifestyles and transvestite lifestyles are fine. They teach godless, sinful morals.

1 Corinthians

015:033 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

Some newer translations use the word ‘company’ instead of ‘communications’, and use the word ‘character’ or ‘morals’ instead of ‘manners’.

The following passage makes it even more clear.

2 Timothy

003:001 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

003:002 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

003:003 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

003:004 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

003:005 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Once again, the section on ‘discrimination’, mentioned earlier, has more on this.

Yes, Jesus associated with ‘publicans and sinners’. But it was to bring them to repentance and a saving faith.

Mark

002:013 And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

002:014 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

002:015 And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

002:016 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

002:017 When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

And Paul writes in his letter to the Corinthians,

1 Corinthians

010:032 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

010:033 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

The point is, 'inclusion' can be sinful. For example, it is wrong for adults to teach children that all lifestyles are OK. It does not mean that people should be overtly offensive to the ungodly. That would be wrong. (See "Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 5 – Give None Offense".) But it does mean teaching inclusion can be wrong/sinful.

To summarize, we should not discriminate based on race or wealth. But the bible teaches we should discriminate based on someone's immoral acts or life style. Yes, Jesus ate with 'sinners', and Paul tried to be friendly with the heathen as well – in order to bring them to repentance and a saving faith. They are examples for us today. But that does not mean we should accept or partake in an immoral lifestyle.

Issues – Sharing School Locker Rooms and Bathrooms

Starting around 2015, there was a push by transvestites to use whatever washroom or school locker room they like. For example, if a boy felt like he was a girl, then he wanted to use the girls washroom in school, and use the girls locker room when changing clothes for gym class. Some schools offered these boys the use of the faculty bathrooms instead. But these trans boys, and their parents/lawyers, insisted they be allowed to use the girl's facilities because it would do harm to the trans boys mental health. Schools were forced into allowin this. What the girls wanted was of no importance.

Is it wrong that girls feel embarrassment or shame when naked in front of trans boys in a locker room? Are there biblical principles on this? Let's go back to the very beginning, when Adam and Eve sinned...

Genesis

003:002 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

003:003 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

003:004 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

003:005 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

003:006 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

003:007 **And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.**

After Adam and Eve fell into sin, they felt shame being naked. Even though it was only 2 of them, they felt shame and created clothing. Was it wrong for them to create clothing? No. Notice what God did

Genesis

003:021 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

The clothes which God created was actually a type of prophecy. Animals had to be slain to create clothes for Adam and Eve. Centuries later, Jesus would die to cover our sins. But the point here is, God gave them clothing.

There are other passages as well about nakedness. But the point is, people do have a sense of shame. People do not like appearing naked in front of others, especially the opposite sex. Their privacy should be respected.

There are many passages in the bible about nakedness. Many of those passages use that term when talking about having a sex. There are other passages where the term 'nakedness' refers to poverty, and sometimes 'reveal sinful lives'. In all cases, it implies shame. However, there are other passages which use the term 'nakedness' in a derogatory way, in a way to shame the person or a people. For example,

Isaiah

047:001 Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.

047:002 Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.

047:003 **Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen:** I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.

Now there are some that say girls should share locker rooms with boys regardless how they feel about it. But the bible teaches that we should not do things which offend the consciences of others. The following is one such passage. At the time, animals were sacrificed to gods in pagan temples. The meat was later sold for food. Some people would not eat the meat because it was sacrificed to a pagan god. But the apostle Paul wrote that while there is nothing wrong with eating that meat, we should not do it if it offends another person/diner.

1 Corinthians

008:001 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

008:002 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

008:003 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

008:004 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

008:005 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

008:006 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

008:007 **Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.**

008:008 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

008:009 **But take heed lest by any means this liberty of your's become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.**

008:010 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

008:011 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

008:012 But when ye sin so, against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

008:013 **Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.**

So even if someone rejects the belief it is wrong for girls to be naked in front of boys, this passage makes it clear that it is wrong to offend the conscience of the girls if they feel it is wrong to be naked in front of boys.

It is interesting that those in authority want to force girls to share their locker rooms with trans boys and yet they themselves will not appear naked in public. If those in authority think it is OK for girls to share their locker rooms with boys, then why would they (who are in authority) want to wear clothes on a hot summer day in public? Hypocrisy? There are reasons why people wear clothes that have nothing to do with fashion or the weather. There are reasons why public nudity is illegal in most public places. There are good reasons for not allowing boys in girls school locker rooms.

Issues - Anti-Semitism

Yes, this is another form of racism. So, why have a special section on it?

Well, its roots are a little different than some other forms of racism. As incredible as it may seem, some people want to blame the Jewish people for the death of Jesus 2000 years ago. They point to the following passage to justify it.

Matthew

027:024 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

027:025 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

027:026 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

They also use the following verses to reinforce their argument.

Exodus

020:004 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

020:005 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

020:006 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

There are huge flaws in their reasoning.

First, even if the passage in Exodus did apply, it only would extend to 3 or 4 generations.

Second, Jesus stated that no one took His life. Rather, He 'laid it down'.

John

010:017 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

010:018 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Third, Jesus forgave them. Some say His prayer was only for the Roman soldiers who crucified Him. I believe it was for all who participated.

Luke

023:033 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

023:034 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

Forth, we are not guilty for the sins of our parents. (The reference in Exodus 20:5 concerns children to continue in the sin of their fathers.)

Deuteronomy

24:016 The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

Fifth, God loves Israel. How can we hate a people that God loves?

1 Kings

010:009 Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.

2 Chronicles

009:008 Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.

Jeremiah

031:003 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Sixth, we are to love all people. Notice Jesus did not make an exception.

Mark

012:028 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

012:029 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

012:030 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

012:031 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Additional bible verses could be added to each of these points. However, these should be sufficient.

Another cause is based on the treatment of Palistinian Arabs. When Jewish people came to Palistine in the late 1940's, many Arabs where forced from their homes and their property was confiscated without being reimbursed. Also, many Jewish people have, and continue to treat the Arabs very badly, as if they were a subspecies.

See sections on Israel and Treaties for more perspectives.

One more point - we must remember that the Bible has many prophecies regarding the future which include the nation of Israel. It includes prophecies how the Jewish people return to God. And it includes a plan/mission God has for them. And note that Satan would like to make God a liar by disrupting those plans, or even eliminating them. That may be the cause of some anti-Semitism.

Issues – What the World Needs to Understand About Christians

Non-Christians often think Christians are bigots who need to be re-educated. So, they lose their bigotry. However, this is usually a misconception. What non-Christians do not realize is that they are not like true born again Christians. When a person accepts Christ thru faith, and gives their hearts and lives to God, they are born again. Sometimes in a subtle way. Sometimes in a dramatic way. But they are changed and have a special union or communion with Him. As the Bible states

2 Corinthians

005:017 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

See also John chapter 17. I could go into more detail. But this is something people should discover for themselves. Part of Jesus's prayer is below

John

017:022 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that ☐ they may be one, even as we are one:

017:023 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

The point is, acceptance and/or compliance with evil will cause vexation to a true Christian.

2 Peter

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

Religion is more than trivial rituals practiced at a church, temple, mosque, etc. Religion is a relationship with God.

Religion is following the tenants of that faith. When a government forces a person to show acceptance of what they believe is evil, then that is a violation of their religion.

As mentioned before, when a person becomes a true born again Christian, they have a special union or communion with God as described in the following Bible passages. (There are more passages. This is just a sample.) You may not believe this. But to understand Christians, it is important to be aware of this.

John

003:005 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Another of Jesus's statement is

John

014:015 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

014:016 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

014:017 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Another of Jesus's statements is

John

016:013 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

John

010:025 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

010:026 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

010:027 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

1 Corinthians

003:016 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

003:017 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

1 Corinthians

006:019 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

2 Timothy

001:013 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

001:014 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

1 John

004:013 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

Romans

008:014 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Romans

008:009 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if So, be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

1 Thessalonians

005:019 Quench not the Spirit.

Ephesians

004:030 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

The Spirit is grieved when a born-again person willfully and knowingly disobeys. This can lead to a loss of closeness with God, and loss of the blessings the Spirit gives to believers.

Non-Christians will not fully understand Christians.

1 John

003:001 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:
therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

The Bible teaches in 1 Corinthians (especially chapter 8) that some Christians are stronger, more mature than others. Christians must grow up in their faith just like people grow up from infants to adults, and adults to seniors. The way Christians do this is by studying God's word and thru obedience. It also teaches that mature Christians not do anything to offend the faith of weaker Christians.

The following are some of the passages which talk about growing up.

1 Peter

002:001 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, all evil speakings,
002:002 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:
002:003 If So, be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

1 Corinthians

003:001 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.
003:002 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.
003:003 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

Hebrews

005:012 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.
005:013 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

005:014 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

A little deeper explanation of carnality may be helpful. To be 'carnal' means to live after your human desires, irrespective of what God asks. It means living as one pleases. And this seems to describe most Christians. It grieves the Holy Spirit and these people are not sensitive to His leading. In most ways, it is hard knowing if carnal Christians are really born again. They act and speak like non-Christians. Some carnal Christians are that way because they have little knowledge of the Bible. Some are that way because they were mature Christians, but gave into their early desires like the story of the prodigal son in the Bible. To grow up, it is important to read/study the Bible, and to try to do what God desires. As Jesus said,

John

014:015 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

The Bible also teaches 2 important things about having a right relationship with God. One is that God deeply loves each of us. Second, God compares His love for us with that between spouses.

Two key verses are

John

003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Proverbs

009:010 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

So how are these 2 verses related? Yes, we should have total reverence to God. But having fear of God is more than that. You see, a better translation of John 3:16 might be, "for God was So, in love with each person in the world". God is in love with each of us. And He wishes we shared that love for Him. Have you ever been So, in love with someone you were scared to hurt their feelings? That is one of the kinds of fear God wishes we have for Him.

The book, Song of Solomon in the Bible, is an analogy of God's love for us.

Jesus even compared His relationship to the church (the collection of all true believers) as the relationship between a groom and his bride. And even the Old Testament (the Torah) compares sin with the infidelity of a wife, or a prostitute.

So you see, when government tells Christians they must do something against what their hearts say, it is a sin, and a violation of the First Amendment.

Another important thing to realize is the dual nature of people. They have a spirit which lives in a physical body. This is true for all people. When someone accepts Christ as their savior, their spirit is born again, but not the body. This leads to a conflict as the apostle Paul writes in the Bible

Romans

007:014 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

007:015 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

007:016 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

007:017 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

007:018 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

007:019 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

007:020 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

007:021 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

007:022 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

007:023 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

007:024 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

007:025 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So, then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Actually, the spirit side of a mature Christian is similar to what is described in the Torah.

Jeremiah

031:033 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

In the following passage, Jesus uses the term sheep to refer to people.

John

010:025 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

010:026 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

010:027 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

Another important point to understanding Christians is that most people who think and claim they are Christians really are not. Many join churches just to be part of a community of nice people. Some join because they think all there is to being a Christian is to be a nice person. And many churches have fallen into liberalism, adopting/creating doctrine not based on the Bible, but based on what people want to hear. So, many So, called Christians believe what they want to believe rather than accept what the Bible teaches.

2 Timothy

004:003 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

004:004 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

And another warning about Christian churches falling into apostacy.

Jude

001:003 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

001:004 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Issues – Morality Laws

So what is meant by the term “morality laws”?

Broadly speaking, some laws protect people from crimes such as robbery, murder, rape and the like. In these crimes, there is a clear innocent victim. But there are other “crimes” which are considered victimless. For example, prostitution, public drunkenness, and public nudity are against the law in most places. But they are considered “victimless” crimes because it is said no one is hurt except the person who engages in those activities.

So what does the Bible say about morality laws? Does the Bible put down any guidelines or principles in this area?

Well, there are Bible passages on this. They can be split into 2 groups – those given to the nation of Israel 3000+ years ago, and those which apply today. The reason for the difference is described a little later.

Morality Laws for the Nation Israel

The laws God gave to Israel include severe punishments for certain sins. But one must keep in mind, God gave Israel a special mission – to be a nation of priests, to draw other people to God.

Exodus

019:005 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

019:006 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

The following is another passage how Israel would draw people to it and to God. This passage is from the opening of the temple in Jerusalem. Note that the word ‘stranger’ refers to foreigners.

1 Kings

008:041 Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;

008:042 (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house;

008:043 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.

So the punishments were often severe. And the severity reflects how God feels about sin. Some of those sins and punishments included:

Leviticus

020:009 For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood shall be upon him.

- 020:010 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.
- 020:011 And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.
- 020:012 And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.
- 020:013 If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.
- 020:014 And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.
- 020:015 And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.
- 020:016 And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

Morality Law Principles for Today

Principle 1 – Open Sin is Condemned

The Bible condemns sin. Some sin like murder is against the law. But should governments pass morality laws – laws on open sin? Actually, governments already do to some degree. There are laws on nudity, drunkenness, and the like.

But does morality affect how God judges nations? The following passages seem to answer that question.

Isaiah

- 003:008 For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory.
- 003:009 The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

The above passage was given to the nation of Israel around 760 BC. The passage refers to the city of Sodom which was destroyed by God for the sins of its people.

Notice the phrase “they hide it not”. So, not only were the people of Israel very sinful, but they did not try to hide their sins. And God not only condemned the sin, but also the flaunting of it.

And what was the sin of Sodom?

Ezekiel

- 016:049 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.
- 016:050 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.

Another bible passage alludes to why they were destroyed.

Jude

001:007 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Many sins could be labeled “victimless” crimes or sins. So, this is one basis for having morality laws.

This is a reason why many Christians oppose gay marriage and take a stand on moral issues. Open sin can bring judgment on a nation.

The Bible also condemns those who say call what is evil good and rejects God’s law.

Isaiah

005:020 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

005:021 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

005:022 Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

005:023 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

005:024 Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, So, their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

Jeremiah

008:012 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

The next question is, if a country passes laws on morality, what is the basis of morality? The Bible? Popular culture?

The book of Judges in the Bible records a time when the nation of Israel continually lapsed into sin, was punished by God, repented, and was liberated from the punishment. The last verse of Judges summarizes the period.

Judges

021:025 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

And that was the problem – every person did that which was right in his own eyes.

Proverbs

014:034 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

But may be the best example why morality laws are needed comes from the story of Lot in the Biblical book of Genesis. It is contained in the section entitled “Issues – Schools” So, all the Biblical text is not repeated here. (Please see that other section for the complete story.) But in summary, Lot believed in God (had a saving faith) and therefore God viewed him as good. Lot chose to live in the evil city of Sodom because of its prosperity. Years later, God instructed Lot and his family to leave because He was going to destroy the city. The men of Sodom went to Lot’s house because they wanted to have their way (rape) the messengers. Lot offered them his daughters instead. When they refused his offer, the messengers blinded the men outside the house. After Lot’s family fled the city and God destroyed it, Lot’s daughters got him drunk and slept with him because they wanted children. The point of this is, living among the Sodomites who openly practiced immoral acts corrupted the thinking and morals of Lot’s family. That is a major problem in a society which has no morality laws.

Another illustration is the brief story of King Asa whom the Bible says did what was right in God’s sight.

1 Kings

015:008 And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.

015:009 And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah.

015:010 And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

015:011 And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father.

015:012 And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

I do not believe God is asking people to do this today. However, this passage does reveal how strongly God feels towards sodomy and idolatry. Then how do born again Christians feel toward acceptance of these things?

In summary, there are 2 major points. First, when a society’s morals are low, even good people are corrupted by living in it. And second, God does judge nations on morality.

Principle 2 – Open Sin Corrupts Society

But if one rejects the above, is there any other reasons for having morality laws? Well, yes, there are. Consider the following passage.

1 Corinthians

015:033 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

More modern translations use phrases like ‘company’ or ‘companions’ instead of communications; and ‘morals’ or ‘character’ instead of manners. The point is, being around bad people corrupts one’s morals or attitudes.

This should not be surprising. Most people, even godless people, recognize this truth. For example, good parents want to know their children’s friends. And they will forbid their children to associate with other kids who are of bad character. Good parents will also restrict the media (movies, TV, internet, music) that their children can watch or hear. Why? Because they want their children to grow up to be good people.

The point is, the shows one watches and music one hears does affect one's attitudes. What is accepted in society affects one's character. So, without morality laws, the entire community morals will go down.

Exodus

023:002 Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil;

There are additional bible passages that add to this thought.

Proverbs

012:026 The righteous is more excellent than his neighbor: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

Proverbs

014:007 Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.

Proverbs

014:034 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

Proverbs

022:006 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Proverbs

024:001 Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.

Proverbs

025:026 A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

Some more modern translations use the phrase "give way" instead of "falling down before".

Also, please see the section entitle, "Issues – Schools". It give several bible passages on raising and teaching children in a godly environment. But how can a person raise a child in a godly environment if there are no morality laws?

One problem in today's US society is that some are trying to say some things are good and should be accepted by all people when the bible condemns them. Many say that society should embrace gay lifestyle and prostitution as socially acceptable. But doing So, will impact society in bad ways.

Consider again the biblical story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot and his family lived there until God ordered them out before the city was destroyed. Consider what happened to Lot and his family.

1. Lot's morals were poor, presumably from living in the city. Notice that when the men of the city wanted to rape the male visitors staying with Lot that Lot offered his daughters to them. What kind of father would do such a thing?
2. Lot's home was destroyed when the city was destroyed

3. Lot's wife died when she turned around to see the city's destruction
4. After Lot and his family left the city, Lot got drunk and his daughters had sex with him because they wanted children.
5. Apparently only Lot believed in God and therefore was considered a 'righteous' man because he is the only one mentioned in 2 Peter 2 verses 6-8. Lot's entire family appear to be lost to all eternity (hell).

And why did they not believe in God? Probably, in part, because of the godless, depraved society in which they lived.

Principle 3 – Living in Immoral Society Is Vexing to Godly People

2 Peter 2

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

Principle 4 – Morality Laws are Needed

For reasons mentioned above (principles 1-3), morality laws are needed. But beside morality laws, people must be sensible. People should avoid media portraying or promoting poor morals. People need to be selective about their friends and those they associate with. People must show discretion when choosing schools for their children. (See also "Issues – Schools".)

Principle 5 – Morality Law Enforcement

Please see section entitled "Government Responsibilities - Religious Tolerance - Should Apostates or Unbelievers Be Killed?" Although morality laws are needed, the Old Testament punishments are not for today.

Principle 6 – Governments Should Obey God and God Will Put Down Rebellion

The second psalm is an interesting warning to all peoples and governments. Notice the first 3 verses. It asks why do the people rage thinking they can oppose God. In verse 3, it talks about breaking bands and cords that hold them back. I believe this is a reference to God's will is holding them back – a desire to discard biblical teaching of Jesus and biblical morality as the basis for laws. Verses 4-9 is a yet to be fulfilled prophecy about Jesus returning and putting down the rebellion. Verses 10-12 instruct rulers (judges, kings, etc) to obey God.

Psalms

002:001 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

002:002 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

002:003 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

002:004 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.

002:005 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

002:006 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

002:007 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

002:008 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

002:009 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

002:010 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

002:011 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

002:012 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

I know Psalm 2 refers to the time of the Great Tribulation. However, it sounds applicable even today. The US government seems enraged at the idea of using Christian principles in the laws. The US seems bent on following the path that Israel followed during the time of the Judges. I wish government paid close attention to Psalm 2 and follow its instructions in verses 10-11.

Issues – Prostitution

Prostitution falls under the category of ‘morality laws’. So, why mention it specifically? It is partly because there is growing talk of legalizing it. And it is partly to go into more depth why morality laws matter.

One of the most succinct passages on the subject may be the one below. In it, it declares prostitution ‘wickedness’ and it warns the entire land could fall into that sin.

Leviticus

019:029 Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness.

In the following 2 passages, female prostitution and male sodomy (some translation use the term prostitution here also) is called ‘an abomination’.

Deuteronomy

023:017 There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel.

023:018 Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

1 Kings 14:24

014:024 And there were also sodomites in the land: and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

The following 2 passages summarize the reign of 2 kings of Judah. Notice that in each passage, the king is said to have done what was right in the eyes of God. And in each, it is said the king removed sodomites from the land. So,

1 Kings

015:011 And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father.

015:012 And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

1 Kings

022:041 And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.

022:042 Jehoshaphat was thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

022:043 And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD; nevertheless the high places were not taken away; for the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.

022:044 And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.

022:045 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

022:046 And the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.

Now remember the following 2 passages

Psalms

002:010 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

002:011 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

2 Sam

023:003 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

So since governments are to obey God, and if the bible says the kings were right in ending sodomy, should not governments make prostitution illegal?

Issues – Gay Marriage, Transvestites, Transgender

So then what are the Bible's guidelines on marriage? Is it right for gays to be married?

A Sin?

Much of what can be said on this topic was covered in the section entitled "Issues – Morality Laws".

In the following passage, it is revealed that God destroyed the city of Sodom because its lack of charity and for committing abominations.

Ezekeil

016:049 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

016:050 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.

The following passage also alludes to why these cities were destroyed

Jude

001:007 **Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.**

And the story of Lot (discussed earlier) reveals how living in a corrupt society like that in Sodom or Gomorrah can destroy the lives of good people.

So is homosexuality an abomination?

Leviticus

018:022 **Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.**

Leviticus

020:007 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.

020:008 And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you.

020:009 For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood shall be upon him.

020:010 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

020:011 And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

020:012 And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.

020:013 **If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.**

020:014 And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

020:015 **And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.**

020:016 And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

020:017 And if a man shall take his sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness; it is a wicked thing; and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people: he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity.

020:018 And if a man shall lie with a woman having her sickness, and shall uncover her nakedness; he hath discovered her fountain, and she hath uncovered the fountain of her blood: and both of them shall be cut off from among their people.

020:019 And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister: for he uncovereth his near kin: they shall bear their iniquity.

020:020 And if a man shall lie with his uncle's wife, he hath uncovered his uncle's nakedness: they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless.

020:021 And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.

020:022 Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out.

020:023 And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them.

020:024 But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people.

Deuteronomy

023:017 There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, **nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel.**

1 Corinthians

006:009 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: **neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,**

006:010 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Timothy

001:008 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

001:009 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

001:010 For whoremongers, **for them that defile themselves with mankind**, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

Theses passages refer to men. But are they applicable to women too? Yes. Notice the following passage in Romans.

Romans

001:026 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: **for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:**

001:027 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

What about dressing like the opposite sex (being transgender or transvestite)?

Deuteronomy

022:005 **The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do So, are abomination unto the LORD thy God**

The following passage summarizes the sinful nature of people.

Romans

001:021 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

001:022 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

001:023 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

001:024 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

001:025 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

001:026 **For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:**

001:027 **And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.**

001:028 **And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;**

001:029 **Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,**

001:030 **Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,**

001:031 **Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:**

001:032 **Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.**

Born This Way

Some people defend homosexuality by saying, 'I was born this way'. But the fact is, people are born sinful, self-centered, and selfish. Parents teach children to be good – see what a child will do who is not disciplined by its parents. But notice what Jesus said about our natural heart – the heart we are born with.

Matthew

015:019 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

Mark

007:020 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

007:021 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

007:022 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

007:023 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

This is the heart or nature that people are born with. (See the section below on what Jesus said about homosexuality which can be likened to fornication.) So, just to say, “I was born this way” justifies nothing. Notice the following passages which confirm we are born with this nature.

Psalm

051:005 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Newer translations are more clear, stating we are sinful from the time we are conceived. Other passages supporting this are

Psalm

058:003 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies

Jeremiah

017:009 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Another passage describes the nature with which we are born as ‘the flesh’ or ‘lust of the flesh’.

Galations 5

005:016 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

005:017 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: So, that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

005:018 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

005:019 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

005:020 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

005:021 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

005:022 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

In short, people are born as very selfish and self centered individuals.

Some say that because ‘they were born that way’, it must be good because that is how God created them – that is their claim. But notice the following verse.

James

001:013 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

001:014 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

001:015 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

The following makes it clear that living according to ones natural desires is not pleasing to God.

Romans

008:007 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

008:008 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

The point is, all people desire evil things. This is part of the nature they are born with. So, should all people act on these desires and justify it by saying, “I was born this way”? – because that is the nature they are born with? Should a murderer justify himself by saying, “I was born this way”? Or should people control themselves?

When a child is born, it may seem like they are pure in every way. But an analogy might be that of a vine. A child is like a leaf that was cut off from the vine. It might seem like the leaf is pure and healthy. It may appear that the leaf is full of life. But the leaf is, in a sense, dead already because it will wither away since it is not in the vine. The only way the leaf will live is if it is grafted back into the vine. We are born as leaves. Christ is the vine. (No analogy is perfect. Please do not take the analogy any farther than this.)

Lessons from Lot's Family

Jesus taught tolerance. But there is a difference between tolerance and acceptance. If a moral code is not upheld by society, then society will become more and more corrupt like Lot's family. And God does judge nations, in part, by their collective morality, just like He judged Sodom and Gomorrah.

The point is, Christians live in an immoral world and they need to be tolerant of people. But that does not mean they must accept the actions of worldly people or to socialize with them. And it does not mean Christians should support the removal of morality laws. On the contrary, the bible declares that governments are to be obedient to God.

The story of Lot is a great example of what can occur when people fail to follow God's commandment on this. In this story, Lot, a Godly man and nephew of Abraham, chooses to live near Sodom because it was a fertile area. He ignored the fact that the people there were very evil. Later, the Bible reveals how this warped the judgment of his family and how evil his children became.

The story starts with his decision to live near Sodom.

Gen

013:007 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

013:008 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.

013:009 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

013:010 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

013:011 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

013:012 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

013:013 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

God then warns Abraham that he plans to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because of the evil population. Abraham asks God if he would spare the cities for the sake of the righteous (good people). God agrees.

Gen

018:020 And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;
018:021 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.
018:022 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.
018:023 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?
018:024 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?
018:025 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?
018:026 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.
018:027 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and ashes:
018:028 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.
018:029 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake.
018:030 And he said unto him, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.
018:031 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.
018:032 And he said, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.
018:033 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

Next, Lot meets 2 men, some believe they were angels in human form. Notice in chapter 19 verse 5, men of Sodom asked Lot for the men So, they could 'know them' – ie, know them sexually. Notice how warped Lot's view is in verse 8 when he offers his daughters to the men outside his house. Yet he is considered 'righteous' because he is being spared by God. (Remember in chapter 15, verse 6 state the following about Abraham, So, it is true of Lot too regardless of his actions, "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.".)

Gen

019:001 And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;
019:002 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.
019:003 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.
019:004 But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:
019:005 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.
019:006 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,

019:007 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not So, wickedly.

019:008 Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

019:009 And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door.

019:010 But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.

019:011 And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: So, that they wearied themselves to find the door.

Then God destroyed the 2 cities. Notice that the 2 men (or angels) took Lot, his wife, and his 2 married daughters, but his 2 sons in law did not go, implying they did not believe in God.

Gen

019:012 And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place:

019:013 For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.

019:014 And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

019:015 And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

019:016 And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

019:017 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

019:018 And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my LORD:

019:019 Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

019:020 Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

019:021 And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.

019:022 Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

019:023 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

019:024 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

019:025 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

019:026 But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

The epilog to this story is an illustration on how corrupt Lot's daughters were. They caused their father to become drunk and sleep with them.

Gen

019:030 And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

019:031 And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth:

019:032 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

019:033 And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

019:034 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

019:035 And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

019:036 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

This story of Lot illustrates how living in a godless community corrupted him and his family. Lot's judgment was corrupted by offering his daughters to the men of Sodom. Some of his daughters married godless men who were probably later destroyed in the city. His wife failed to believe and died. And his unmarried daughters cause their father to get drunk and have children by him. This illustrates why it is important for Christians to have their children raised (go to) Christian schools rather than godless schools, or schools lacking Christian teaching and principals.

Galations

006:007 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

006:008 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

So do not be surprised that if one lives in a community with godless morality, they adopt a godless morality. And by allowing gay marriage, society is sending a message that it accepts what the Bible condemns. This will affect the thoughts and morality of the society.

Some people argue that laws against gay marriage discriminate against them, and therefore is wrong. They imply that all discrimination is wrong. However, there are other laws which discriminate against people and they do not object to them. For example, public nudity, polygamy, marriage of people to animals are illegal. Also, it is illegal for petofiles to work as school teachers. And it is illegal for felons to work at certain types of government jobs. These are discriminatory laws. The point is, some forms of discrimination can be good for society.

People who say they oppose all discrimination are usually not telling the truth.

What Jesus Taught About Homosexuality

Some people state that Jesus did not teach homosexuality was a sin. But that is not accurate. There are 3 key passages on this. First, note what Jesus said in the following passage

Matthew

005:017 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

So if the Scriptures condemn something, then that is still true. Please note that God gave the Jewish nation some laws specific to them. I do not believe this applies to that law.

But what did Jesus say, if anything, on sexual sin. Well, in the following passage, Jesus states that adultery and fornication are both sin. One is sexual sin when someone is married. The other is sexual sin when someone is not married.

Matthew

015:019 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

015:020 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

So, to whom can one be married to avoid this sin? Jesus said that marriage is only for a man and woman.

Matthew

019:004 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

019:005 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

019:006 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Please note that these scriptures also speak out against sex between a man and woman outside of marriage. This is not a complete listing of all passages on this subject.

So, to summarize, in Matthew 5 verse 17 Jesus said he was not here to destroy the law. In Matthew 5 verses 19 and 20, Jesus said sex outside of marriage (adultery and fornication) is sin. So, then to whom can someone marry? In Matthew 19 verses 4-6 Jesus said marriage was between a man and a woman.

Some have claimed that Jesus did not explicitly say gay marriage was forbidden, He only said marriage between a man and woman was allowed. Problem with that view is Jesus said what was allowed, period. Anything which was not mentioned by Jesus is not allowed. This is supported by the following passage.

1 Corinthians

007:002 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

In this bible passage, only 1 option is given. If other options were according to God's will, they would have been listed.

So why didn't Jesus speak more explicitly about 'alternative life styles'? I do not know. I *suspect* one reason is that it was not common because to live an 'alternative life style' could result in one's death. Notice the following passage from the Old Testament.

Leviticus

020:010 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

020:011 And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

020:012 And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.

020:013 If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

020:014 And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

020:015 And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.

020:016 And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them

Why was the punishment So, harsh? I do not know all the reasons. But the following explains that God intended Israel to be a nation of priests.

Exodus

019:006 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

019:007 And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him.

Today, the Church is to send out people to preach. But back then, Israel was to be a holy nation and draw people to God.

Gay Women

Some have argued that it is only wrong for men to be homosexual. They claim the bible passages on it only refer to men. For example, notice the following passages.

Leviticus

018:022 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

Leviticus

020:013 **If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.**

020:014 And if a man take a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

020:015 **And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.**

020:016 And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

Notice the passages only refer to men sleeping with other men. Notice Leviticus 20:16 only refers to women sleeping with beasts and not other women. That is the argument these people use to say the command not to be gay only applies to men.

But now notice the following verses, each of which say God is no respecter of persons. So, if something is sinful for a man, it follows that it is also sinful for a woman.

Deuteronomy

010:017 For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

2 Chronicles

019:007 Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.

Romans

002:011 For there is no respect of persons with God.

Acts

010:034 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

010:035 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

1 Peter

001:017 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

So God judges without respect to who you are. He judges equally.

Earlier a passage was quoted in which Jesus said sex outside of marriage was a sin. Notice the following passage which says to avoid fornication (sex outside of marriage), men and women should marry. This is the only option the bible gives. It does not give an option of a woman marrying another woman.

1 Corinthians

007:002 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

In the following passage of Romans, chapter 1 verse 26 condemns the sexual practices of some women. Then notice verse 27 begins with the phrase, "And likewise also the men", equating (making equal) the sinful sexual acts of women with men (making the sex acts of women to be just as evil as those of men).

Romans

001:026 **For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:**

001:027 **And likewise also the men,** leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

So, in summary, only marriage is between a man and woman, sex outside of marriage is sinful, this applies equally to men and women.

Warning of Other Teaching and Cherry Picking

Jesus said the following to the scribes and Pharisees, who were the religious leaders of that day.

Matthew

015:007 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

015:008 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

015:009 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Peter wrote

2 Peter

001:020 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

001:021 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

And Paul wrote

2 Timothy

003:016 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

003:017 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

So scripture is from the inspiration of God. And interpretation of a passage must be consistent with the teaching in other passages.

One more note... There are warnings in the Bible about peoples who have a form of religion, but whose hearts are far from God. The following is one of God's judgments of Israel (called Ephraim here).

Hosea 8

008:011 Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin, altars shall be unto him to sin.

008:012 I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing.

008:013 They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it; but the LORD accepteth them not; now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: they shall return to Egypt.

008:014 For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof.

A Practical Side

There is secular marriage and there is religious marriage. They are not the same and in some countries like France, they are treated differently. It may be pointless to debate whether it should be lawful for gays to marry in secular ceremonies. The US is a democracy and no matter what the scriptures say, the laws will be based on what the majority wants. For Christian politicians, it may be better to focus their energy on important things they might attain, like getting school vouchers that can be used at parochial schools. That would be a major benefit and may get the support of most Americans.

Issues - Polygamy

There are many passages in the bible mentioning God fearing men who had multiple wives and concubines, leading many to believe that God is OK with polygamy. However, these passages simply report facts. They do not state that God approved a man having multiple wives. And when one reads those passages carefully, one notices that these men had problems in their lives because of having multiple wives or lovers.

But what does the bible say on the subject of polygamy. Perhaps the most explicit passages are those giving instructions to church leaders. They are as follows.

1 Timothy

03:002 **A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife**, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

1 Timothy

003:012 **Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife**, ruling their children and their own houses well.

Notice that the above passages state they should have 1 wife, not 2 or 3. And if this is true of church leaders, it should be true for any Christian who wants to be married. And it is true for women as well as men since God stated He is not respecter of persons. This is reinforced by the following passage.

1 Corinthians

007:002 **Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.**

And notice what Jesus said on the subject. Notice in verses 4-6, He refers to 1 man and 1 woman in marriage, not 2 or 3.

Matthew

019:003 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

019:004 **And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,**

019:005 **And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?**

019:006 **Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.**

019:007 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

019:008 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

019:009 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

019:010 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be So, with his wife, it is not good to marry.

019:011 **But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.**

019:012 **For there are some eunuchs, which were So, born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.**

Now notice verses 11-12 above. When Jesus said “there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake”, He is not saying these people had an operation. He is saying these are people who chose to be celibate. These are people who choose to refrain from having families to give all their time to the ministry. Or they may be those who have no strong sexual desire. Or they may be those who have no desire for the opposite sex and want to stay celibate in order to remain in God’s will. The point is, it is fine to remain single. But if one has strong sexual desires that need to be addressed, then one should marry.

But what were the instructions in the Old Testament? One is a passage that is part of a list of instructions for kings. It is

Deuteronomy

017:017 **Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away:** neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

Here, kings were instructed to have only 1 wife. Once again, God not being a respecter of persons, implies that anyone who is married should be married to only 1 person.

Another passage is a series of laws regarding marriage, stating who people should not marry. Notice verses 17-18 which would preclude a person from having multiple wives, at least in certain circumstances.

Leviticus

018:004 Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God.

018:005 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.

018:006 None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the LORD.

018:007 The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she is thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

018:008 The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness.

018:009 The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.

018:010 The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover: for theirs is thine own nakedness.

018:011 The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, she is thy sister, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

018:012 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister: she is thy father's near kinswoman.

018:013 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister: for she is thy mother's near kinswoman.

018:014 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: she is thine aunt.

018:015 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter in law: she is thy son's wife; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

018:016 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it is thy brother's nakedness.

018:017 **Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter**, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; for they are her near kinswomen: it is wickedness.

018:018 **Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time.**

018:019 Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness.

018:020 Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her.

018:021 And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

018:022 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

018:023 Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.

018:024 **Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you:**

018:025 And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.

018:026 **Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you:**

018:027 **(For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;)**

018:028 **That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.**

018:029 For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people.

018:030 Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God

The following passage is one quoted by Jesus and was included earlier in this chapter, which implies marriage is between 1 man and 1 woman.

Genesis

002:024 **Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.**

Issues - Affirming LGBTQ Children

Background

In 2022, several laws were either proposed or passed in states requiring people to affirm a child's desire to be LGBTQ. For example,

1. Some governments passed laws requiring people to use the personal pronouns (like he, she, him, her) by which the person (child or adult) wanted to be referred.
2. Delegate Elizabeth Guzman of the Virginia House of Delegates stated she would propose a law making it either a felony or misdemeanor for a parent not affirming (going along with) their child's desire to be LGBTQ.
3. In 2022, California passes a law requiring parents to accept (go along with, provide) gender transformation treatments for their children, and remove parental rights of parents who do not comply.

So how should this be viewed? What biblical principles are involved.

Biblical Principles

Regarding pronouns, this is largely a freedom of speech issue. But challenging such laws in courts can be very expensive. One alternative some use is simply to use a person's name and never use a personal pronoun when referring to them.

But regarding parents relationships with their children, there are several bible passages which speak to these issues.

First, these laws are inconsistent with the following bible passage

Ephesians

006:001 **Children, obey your parents in the Lord:** for this is right.

006:002 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

006:003 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

006:004 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: **but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.**

And what does the bible teach about the LGBTQ lifestyle? The chapter entitled "Issues – Gay Marriage, Transvestites, Transgender" goes into this in more depth. But the following are a few key passages.

Leviticus

018:022 **Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.**

Deuteronomy

022:005 **The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do So, are abomination unto the LORD thy God**

So the bible teaches against homosexuality, being a transvestite, and the like. So, it is not possible for a Christian parent to affirm/approve their child's desire to be LGBTQ and still be in compliance with Ephesians 6:4. The bible requires Christian parents to oppose a child's desire to be LGBTQ. Therefore, any law requiring affirmation is in violation of the First Amendment.

Some ask, what did Jesus teach on this topic. Although it has been covered before, it will be repeated here. Regarding what Jesus said...

Matthew

019:004 **And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,**

019:005 **And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?**

019:006 **Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.**

Jesus also said

Matthew

015:019 **For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:**

015:020 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

Regarding what Jesus said about raising children,

Matthew

018:002 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

018:003 And said, Verily I say unto you, **Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

018:004 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

018:005 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

018:006 **But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.**

018:007 **Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!**

So, verse 3 says we must be converted. Verse 6 talks about offending a child. What is that? It means saying or doing something that prevents that child from coming to a saving faith/relationship with God. When someone says it is OK to live an LGBTQ lifestyle, they are encouraging that person not to repent, which is needed to come to a saving faith/relationship with God. Yes it is needed as Jesus said in

Matthew

09:011 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?

009:012 But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

009:013 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: **for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**

Importance of Repentance

Jesus gives each of us an invitation to turn to Him and be born again. But part of this invitation includes repentance. You see, turning to God involves turning from sin.

Why is repentance necessary? Because we cannot serve or love 2 masters. Either we follow Jesus or we follow our own lusts as Jesus said below.

Matthew

006:024 **No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.** Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Luke

016:013 **No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.** Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

The verses speak of mammon which is money. But this applies to any other earthly lust as well. If one loves something more than God, how can they come to Him? Remember, there are lots of things that become our masters if we give into our lusts. Some of them include food (gluttony), alcohol, sex, and the like. That is why I lie repeating the following verse.

Deuteronomy

004:029 **But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.**

and

Romans

010:009 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, **and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.**

010:010 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

And the following offer from Jesus.

Revelation

003:019 **As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.**

003:020 **Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.**

The following are additional bible passages illustrating why repentance is So, important. There are many other verses that could be quoted. This is just a selection.

John

003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

003:017 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

003:018 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

003:019 **And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**

003:020 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

003:021 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Luke

005:030 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

005:031 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

005:032 **I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**

So Jesus is calling people to repent.

Luke

013:001 There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

013:002 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?

013:003 **I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**

013:004 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

013:005 **I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**

Luke

024:046 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

024:047 **And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.**

Then notice...

James

002:019 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: **the devils also believe, and tremble.**

002:020 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

The point is, if a person truly believes and is born again, it will be reflected in their life. If someone is a true born-again Christian, they will want to do what God desires. It will show in their lives. Yes, people can drift away from God. But they will want to return.

There has been some confusion with the following passage.

Galatians

005:016 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

005:017 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: So, that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

005:018 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

005:019 **Now the works of the flesh are** manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

005:020 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

005:021 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that **they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

Notice verse 21 which says ‘they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God’. But all people sin and these are among those sins. What this passage is saying is that people who do not repent, who will not turn to God will not inherit the kingdom of God. Turning to God means turning from sin. Giving one’s heart to God means a willingness to give up anything that can stand between us and God, ie, sin. In short, it means repentance.

When one turns to God, they turn from bad works. So, no, repentance is not works.

A similar passage is in

1 Corinthians

006:009 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

006:010 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

We all are sinners. So, is this saying we cannot inherit the kingdom of God? No. So, long as an unbeliever does not want to turn from sin, they will not come to God, they will not turn their heart to God. This is why it is So, tragic to tell someone living in sin that all they have to do is mentally accept the facts of the bible. They may do this, but it does not mean they are born-again. Remember,

Roman

010:010 **For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;** and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

And

Deuteronomy

004:029 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

A person is not doing that if they are unrepentant. Faith is from the heart/spirit, not the head.

Luke

005:031 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

005:032 **I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**

The Tragedy of Affirmation

To have saving faith, a true relationship with God,

Deuteronomy

004:029 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, **if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.**

This does not happen unless an unsaved person repents and turns from sin. The unrepentant are like the people described in verses 19 and 22 below.

Matthew

013:018 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

013:019 **When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.**

013:020 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

013:021 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

013:022 **He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.**

013:023 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

That is why it is So, tragic to tell people being LGBTQ is OK – they will not come to a saving relationship with God if they believe that. And it is tragic for those who tell others it is OK to be LGBTQ because they are pushing someone way from God.

What good does it do to tell someone being LGBTQ is good when their destiny in the afterlife is such a terrible place unless they turn from it?

Once again, this comes down to a First Amendment issue.

Issue – Providing Services for Gay Weddings

This has largely been covered in the section entitled, “Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 4 – Heart of the Matter”.

Issues – Gay Adoptions

There is a bill going thru Congress that would help insure that religious agencies which handle adoptions would be allowed to deny adoptions to gay couples on religious grounds. There is opposition from some in Congress saying they it would discriminate against gays. But mothers who go to these religious agencies do so, because they want their child to be brought up in a true Christian home, not a gay home. Why is this important? The reasons are similar to those listed under the 2 sections about schools in the downloadable PDF. But 2 key passages are repeated below.

Deuteronomy

006:004 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

006:005 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

006:006 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

006:007 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

006:008 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

006:009 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Deuteronomy

011:019 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

011:020 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:

So Christian parents need (are commanded) to raise their children in a godly environment. Many feel (and I agree) that command does not go away if one gives up a child for adoption. Natural parents have that responsibility even if they give up their child for adoption. That is why some parents entrust their child to a Christian adoption agency, So, they know their child will be placed in a true Christian home, having a Christian life style.

Some say that gay couples can be Christian. Others disagree. But does not the First Amendment allow for each of us to follow our religious beliefs? Denying a Christian parent that right when giving up their child for adoption seems to be a violation of the First Amendment.

Issues – Gay Pride Month / Parades

We live in a free country with freedom of religion, speech and assembly. People are largely free to do what they want. But the question here is, should people, especially those in government, support gay pride events like gay pride month and gay pride parades?

For Governments

First, remember that governments are to serve God.

Psalm

002:010 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

002:011 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Notice that God calls the gay lifestyle an abomination.

Leviticus

018:022 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

018:023 Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.

Notice that God calls wearing cloths of the opposite sex and abomination.

Deuteronomy

022:005 The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do So, are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

Notice that God says He hates pride.

Proverbs

006:016 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:

006:017 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

006:018 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

006:019 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren

Notice that the bible says we are to have no 'fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness'. And notice that it is shameful to even speak of these things when those things are done in secret. How much more shameful is it to even speak of them when those things are done in public.

Ephesians

005:011 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

005:012 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

So, is it not shameful/sinful for government to set aside time to celebrate things which are an abomination?

For Christians

First, notice the following verse addressed to Christians.

2 Corinthians

013:005 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Many people who say they are Christians are not. It is good for those people to examine themselves to see if they are true born again Christians. It is also a command to Christians to examine themselves verifying they are living according to God's will. It is possible for Christians to live such sinful lives that they no longer feel the leading of the Holy Spirit – in other words, they grieve or quench the Spirit.

Now Lot, Abrahams nephew, lived in the area of Sodom and Gomorrah which had a very decadent and depraved society. Notice the following passage says he felt 'vexed' living in that society.

2 Peter

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

Do we feel vexed living among people living in open sin? If not, why not? Hint – we should feel vexed. Why?

The bible also teaches we should avoid the appearance of evil.

1 Thessalonians

005:022 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

And it teaches we should not associate with people living in open sin.

2 Thessalonians

003:006 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

003:007 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

Why? In hope that they may be ashamed and turn from sin.

2 Thessalonians

003:014 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

003:015 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

And also because associating with corrupt people can corrupt us.

1 Corinthians

015:033 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

A great example of this is the story of Lot. See the section entitled, "Behind the Veil – Story of Lot / Living in a Godless Community" for more details.

We should not engage in activities or conversations that promote evil life styles. Rather, we should teach Jesus and salvation thru Him, and encourage people to turn from sinful lifestyles to God.

James

005:019 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

005:020 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

Then there are the following warnings:

Isaiah

005:020 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

005:021 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

Remember

2 Thessalonians

002:011 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

002:012 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Please remember that the quotes are from the 400+ year old KJV of the bible. In the following passages, the word 'offend' means 'tempts' and 'offence' means 'temptation'.

Matthew

018:006 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

018:007 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

Luke

017:001 Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

017:002 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

The term 'should offend one of these little ones' means 'to cause one of these little ones to sin/stumble'. People have the responsibility not to encourage others to sin.

Are your words, your support calling good evil or calling evil good? Are your words or actions causing others to think sin is good or acceptable?

We should "Abstain from all appearance of evil". So, how can any Christian celebrate gay pride anything?

Zephaniah

003:005 The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.

Isaiah

005:020 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

005:021 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

005:022 Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

005:023 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

Issues - Gay Rights Rainbow Flag / Noah Covenant Sign

An Issue?

This is probably a very minor issue. But I think it is good to discuss it.

In 2020, the US Department of Defense issued an order stating which flags can be displayed in military facilities. Flags not on the list cannot be displayed.

Some Democratic members of Congress signed and sent a letter to the Department of Defense asking that it explicitly state the Confederate battle flag is banned (even though it is not on the list of approved flags). More importantly, it asked that the gay rainbow-colored flag and flags of Native American 'nations' be allowed to be displayed.

I do not know of any bible passage explicitly saying anything about this. But the gay rainbow flag is offensive to some Christians because gay lifestyles are offensive to them. Also, gay 'rights' often conflict with freedom of religion enjoyed by Christians. But one again, the bible does not speak out against this practice. And remember

2 Timothy

003:012 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

We as Christians sometimes forget that Jesus and the Gospel is offensive to the lost.

1 Peter

002:007 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

002:008 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Isaiah

008:014 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

008:015 And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

The Symbolism

So how should the gay rights rainbow flag be viewed? What is its full symbolism? To look at this, we need to remember what was the original symbolism of rainbow.

Genesis

009:008 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

009:009 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

009:010 And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

009:011 And I will establish my covenant with you, neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

009:012 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

009:013 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

009:014 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

009:015 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

009:016 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

So, it was a symbol of the covenant God made with mankind that He would not destroy the world thru a flood again.

But we should also remember why God killed everyone except Noah.

Genesis

006:005 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

006:006 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

006:007 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

006:008 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

So, God destroyed the people for rejecting Him and indulging in sin. Sadly, people forget this when they look at the gay rights rainbow-colored flag. They either never learned, or have forgotten that this is a symbol was set up after God destroyed a wicked world. And it should remind us of the Great Tribulation period which is coming when God will once again punish a wicked world (and thru it, bring some back to Him).

Matthew

024:021 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

024:022 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

There is more on this in the sections entitled, "Prophecy on Sequence of End Times" and "Prophecies of Society near the End Times" and "Prophecy of Future Judgment & Millennium Kingdom".

So why did God place the flood story in the bible? Because stories like this are to remind us they are example of how God punishes those who reject Him.

2 Peter

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

Jude

001:005 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

001:006 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

001:007 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

And this should remind us that another, greater, judgment of God is coming to this world.

So, when you see a gay pride rainbow flag, remember the implied warning behind it – that it is a warning that God will punish the world again. Sadly, the gays do not seem to see this.

Issues – Conversion Therapy

Some parents want to raise their children as heterosexuals. That is, they want to raise boys as boys, girls as girls. They do not want them to become gays or transvestites or any other sexual alternatives. This is especially true of Christian parents. This brings up several issues

- Biblical principles about raising children
- Importance of Repentance
- What is Conversion Therapy?
- Anti-conversion Laws

Much of the following is this writer's opinion. The writer is not an expert on raising children and only expresses his opinion and biblical principles.

Biblical Principles About Raising Children

Most of this has been covered in sections entitled "Issues – Schools" and "Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 4 – Heart of the Matter". But key portions are repeated and expanded here.

One of the problems with children who want to be gay, or transvestite, or some other sexual alternative, is that they sometimes become suicidal. So, what went wrong?

First thing to remember is

Proverbs

022:006 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Children are the most impressionable at early ages. Once a child reaches their teenage years, they start becoming more independent and set in their ways. Now notice what God says about training in their early lives.

Deuteronomy

006:004 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

006:005 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

006:006 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

006:007 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

006:008 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

006:009 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Deuteronomy

011:018 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

011:019 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

011:020 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:

Joshua

001:008 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

The point is, children are to be raised in a godly environment with the teaching of scriptures 24/7. This cannot be accomplished by sending children to agnostic public schools where they are subjected to earthly morals 6-8 hours a day. Do not be surprised if children who are sent to public schools accept the morality of this world. And church is NOT a substitute. Most church services are only 1 hour a week with a 15 minute sermon. And those sermons are repeated year after year, never progressing beyond the most basic Christian teachings.

In this period of life, children should only be exposed to Christian teaching and morality. They should also be led to a saving relationship with Jesus. This includes being taught of God's love.

Ideally, children should attend Christian parochial schools with conservative Christian teachers. However, in most states, parents have to pay for their children to attend those schools because they do not have a school voucher system. And in some communities, there are no parochial schools at all. One alternative is to bring children to Sunday School classes at a church.

Another alternative is to have a good, daily Christian devotional at home. Personally, I like listening to the Thru The Bible study that is broadcast 7 days a week. Although meant for adults, even children can understand it. Monday thru Friday, it broadcasts a bible study. It takes 5 years to go thru the entire bible. Saturday's program is a question and answer broadcast. On Sunday, they broadcast a sermon. It can be listened to at www.ttb.org. They also have a free phone app for listening to their programs. It is called Thru The Bible. The program is also broadcast on the radio at certain times. This writer, this web site is not associated with TTB in any way, but does recommend it.

There are other, simple things that can be done. Don't watch TV shows with gay characters (when I say 'gay', I mean all alternative lifestyles including tranvestites, etc). That includes talk shows with gay hosts. Avoid shows where characters have anti-Christian morals. Avoid TV news programs that promote or support the gay lifestyle or activities. Do not let children play or associate with those who claim to be gay. And other like activities. Why?

1 Corinthians

015:033 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

Generally, children are most open to instruction before they are teenagers. After that, they become more set in their ways and beliefs. So, what happens if a child decides they want to be of the other sex? If they are young, in my opinion, parents should lay down the law and say 'no'. But when they are teenagers, things start to change. At some point, they will want their independence. It can be hard knowing when that point is reached. The following is a good caution.

Ephesians

006:001 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

006:002 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

006:003 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

006:004 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

You see, being too harsh on children can actually drive them away from Jesus. Berating a child or threatening them with hell can push them away or become dispondant. As James cautions,

James

001:019 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

001:020 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Instead, the bible gives the following advise.

1 Corinthians

010:032 **Give none offence**, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

010:033 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, **that they may be saved.**

Colossians

004:006 **Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt**, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

1 Peter

003:015 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you **with meekness and fear**:

1 Corinthians

009:019 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

009:020 **And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;**

009:021 **To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.**

009:022 **To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.**

009:023 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

Notice the following 2 verses.

2 Corinthians

005:010 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

005:011 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, **we persuade men**; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

2 Timothy

002:024 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; **but be gentle unto all men**, apt to teach, patient,

002:025 **In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves**; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

002:026 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

So, we need to be gentle, meek when trying to persuade people. We should not “strive” or be argumentative. As one minister said, if we are argumentative, people generally will not listen. And even if they do and we win the argument,

they may ignore the message because they are upset they lost the debate. And generally, we are talking about family members.

People need to be drawn to Christ, as written

Deuteronomy

004:029 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

Revelation

003:020 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

If a person is a true born-again Christian, then like the prodigal son, they may get into sin, but they cannot stay there forever. And if the person is not a true Christian, they may try living a godly life. But eventually they will probably get into and stay in a sinful life.

So, is conversion therapy wrong? I suppose it depends on what the therapy is, and the age of the child. Does the therapy follow the principles listed above? Is the therapy's aim to bring the child to a loving, saving relationship with Jesus?

One thing to remember is that we are all born sinful. We are born with selfish, sinful desires.

Matthew

015:019 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

015:020 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

So, everyone is born with evil desires.

But when a person is born again, they are united in Jesus. And even born again Christians experience sinful temptations as Paul writes

Romans

007:017 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

007:018 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

007:019 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

007:020 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Basically, he is saying that when a person is born again, it is their spirit that is born again, united with Jesus. But we still have sinful desires in our bodies. We should endeavor to live a life pleasing to God, as Jesus said,

John

014:015 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

014:016 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

014:017 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

014:018 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

It is important that we live God pleasing lives to maintain fellowship, and not grieve or quench the Holy Spirit. One could lose the close fellowship with God, and lose that sense of peace.

1 John

001:006 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

Isaiah

048:022 There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

One question is, if conversion therapy is being considered, is the child a born again Christian? If not, it is important to lead them to a saving faith. The person needs to want God. As Jesus said,

Matthew

011:028 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

011:029 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

and

Revelation

003:020 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

One key passage is

Deuteronomy

004:029 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

But if they are a born again Christian, try to urge them to follow the desires in their hearts, not bodies. Eventually, they will want to do what is in their hearts, if they are truly a born-again Christian. And caution them about the losses they could have including

- Loss of comfort from God
- Loss of rewards in heaven. Born again Christians cannot lose their salvation. But they could lose any special rewards in heaven.

One last point. If the therapy is done according to God's will, then there is nothing wrong with it and authorities who oppose are wrong.

Acts

005:029 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Importance of Repentance

Jesus gives each of us an invitation to turn to Him and be born again. But part of this invitation includes repentance. You see, turning to God involves turning from sin.

Why is repentance necessary? Because we cannot serve or love 2 masters. Either we follow Jesus or we follow our own lusts as Jesus said below.

Matthew

006:024 **No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.** Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Luke

016:013 **No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.** Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

The verses speak of mammon which is money. But this applies to any other earthly lust as well. If one loves something more than God, how can they come to Him? Remember, there are lots of things that become our masters if we give into our lusts. Some of them include food (gluttony), alcohol, sex, and the like. That is why I lie repeating the following verse.

Deuteronomy

004:029 **But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.**

and

Romans

010:009 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, **and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.**

010:010 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

And tThe following offer from Jesus.

Revelation

003:019 **As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.**

003:020 **Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.**

The following are additional bible passages illustrating why repentance is So, important. There are many other verses that could be quoted. This is just a selection.

John

003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

003:017 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

003:018 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

003:019 **And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**

003:020 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.
 003:021 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Luke

005:030 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?
 005:031 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.
 005:032 **I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**

Luke

013:001 There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.
 013:002 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?
 013:003 **I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**
 013:004 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?
 013:005 **I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**

Luke

024:046 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:
 024:047 **And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.**

Then notice...

James

002:019 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: **the devils also believe, and tremble.**
 002:020 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

The point is, if a person truly believes and is born again, it will be reflected in their life. If someone is a true born-again Christian, they will want to do what God desires. It will show in their lives. Yes, people can drift away from God. But they will want to return. For more on this, see the section entitled "Parables of the Prodigal Son and the Prodigal Pig" in the section called "Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 2 – Christians".

What Is Conversion Therapy?

Conversion therapy can be in several forms including

1. Psychological therapy in which they try to alter a patient's thought patterns. It may include bullying patients or berating them.
2. Giving medicines to patients to alter behaviors.
3. Some "faith base" groups use beratings, prayers, beating, shackling, food deprivation, and even exorcism.

What was discussed earlier in this chapter could also be called a form of conversion therapy.

Anti-Conversion Laws

In 2022, Canada passed a law, Bill C-4, which forbids conversion therapy. It also outlaws taking a child into another country to receive conversion therapy. Part of the law's exact wording is, "20.102 Everyone who knowingly causes another person to undergo conversion therapy — **including by providing conversion therapy to that other person — is 20 (a) guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term of not more than five years; or (b) guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction. "**

The law is broad and covers any form of conversion therapy, including what was discussed earlier in this chapter. Yes, Jesus that force should not be used.

Matthew

010:012 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

010:013 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

010:014 **And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.**

This is the approach that should be used in all evangelism – offer information/instruction to those that want it. Pass on by if they are not interested.

In the US, this law could be a violation of freedom of speech if used against parents teaching their children about God and the bible. It would also be a violation of freedom of religion because the bible (in Deuteronomy) teaches parents are to raise their children in a godly environment 24/7.

Some claim that conversion therapy is child abuse, and, depending on the type, probably is. But depending on what the therapy is, it may not be child abuse. For example, teaching parts of the bible/gospel may be considered conversion therapy because part of it is to cause people to want to repent of their sins.

I don't see this (teaching the bible) as child abuse. It is, or should be, part of parenting. Parents are to raise their children in a godly environment, teach them about God and the bible among other things. They also have to discipline children when they misbehave or get into sin. And if the child goes astray, it is their responsibility to correct bad behavior. I am not familiar with conversion therapy. But parents should bring their children into a saving relationship, saving faith in Jesus. Once the child becomes a born-again Christian, they will want to abandon anything displeasing to God.

I think a key to therapy would be, "But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul." (Deuteronomy 4:29) and "For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) And remind the child, God is deeply in love with them. Yes, in love.

So, therapy, depending on how it is done, could save a person's eternal life.

Of course, there are always some who want to live the now and live in sin. Some believe that they can continue in sin, never repent, and still be Christians. But notice the following passage.

1 Corinthians

006:009 **Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?** Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

006:010 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

006:011 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

This does not mean sinners (which we all are) cannot be forgiven, as it is written in

Mark

003:028 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

003:029 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.

003:030 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

But what it means is that those who reject God and do not repent will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Once people are born again, they have a dual nature. Their spirit (or soul) is in Christ and only desires what God wants. But their moral bodies still want to sin. As Paul wrote,

Romans

007:015 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

One analogy is this. A person may will to hold their arm straight out from their body. But eventually gravity will force the person to lower their arm. In the same way, we may want to only do God's will. But our sinful bodies will cause us to sin.

We need to turn to God. And turning to God requires us to turn from sin, and repent, opening our hearts to Him, ask Him into our hearts, and become born again.

John

003:003 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

So, in summary, parents teaching the bible to their children is good and just. Other forms of conversion therapy are probably wrong.

Caution To Those Who Oppose All Forms Of Conversion Therapy

The Canadian law could be interpreted as meaning parents cannot teach the bible to their children. It could be interpreted as meaning a parent cannot force their young children to dress and act their 'at birth' gender. Prohibiting parents from doing these things goes against biblical teaching. And Jesus gave the following warning to people who keep children away from God.

Matthew

018:001 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

018:002 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

018:003 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

018:004 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

018:005 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

- 018:006 **But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.**
- 018:007 **Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!**

Issues – Missions, Forced Conversions and Inquisitions

Introduction

There have been many cases in history where people believed that heathen should be 'converted' to Christianity, even when it is against their will. First, this is contrary to what Jesus taught. Second, forcing someone to claim they are Christian does not mean they are truly a Christian. Remember,

Romans

010:010 **For with the heart man believeth** unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Deuteronomy

004:029 **But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.**

A person who is tortured is not going to seek God with their heart.

All this may be obvious to Christians. But many non-Christians do not know this and believe Christianity is a barbaric religion.

So why is this an issue? Because countries have gone to war over religion, and have tried to force conversions on their citizens. The book, "Fox's Book of Martyrs" contains good examples.

Background / History

When Rome was conquered around 400AD, the Bishop of Rome became a kind of de-facto government. Catholics state that the papacy originated around 29AD when Jesus returned to heaven. Protestants say it started around 400AD.

Over time, the Roman Catholic Church developed a hierarchy with the pope as its head. Now during the Dark and Middle Ages, nobles would pass along their titles and property to their first-born son. Some other sons may be told to join the church. Sometimes the nobles would buy higher positions within the church hierarchy for their sons, such as a bishop, arch bishop, or even a cardinal. These sons were usually not true Christians, never read the bible, and were corrupt desiring comfortable living from church offerings. Many had children and mistresses. Some had mansions. So, there was a mix of good and bad people in the church's hierarchy.

The Catholic Church spread the Gospel throughout Europe. Occasionally faced serious heresies which they tried to put down. But some false doctrine (which contradicts the bible) also crept into the Church's teachings.

By the time of the Protestant Reformation movement (around 1500), Europe was facing a threat of a Muslim invasion which could wipe out Christianity in large parts of Europe and cause persecution of Christians. But by this time, the Catholic Church hierarchy was largely Christian only in name. They saw Protestants as a threat to church offerings (their income). And if people read the bible, they would discover the false doctrines which crept into the Catholic Church, and could cause more people to become Protestants. They should have endorsed Martin Luther to clean up the Church's teachings but instead condemned him as a heretic.

And the corrupt Catholic Church hierarchy ordered the elimination of Protestants, resulting in wars of religion, massacres, tortures, exiles, and the like. It is recommended that one read "Fox's Book Of Martyrs" to get a better understanding of this period.

Biblical Teaching

Jesus taught that we are to spread the Gospel to all the world.

Matthew

028:018 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

028:019 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

028:020 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Notice He said to preach the Gospel. He did not say force people to accept it. This principle is maybe best illustrated in the following passage.

Matthew

010:001 And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

010:002 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

010:003 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

010:004 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

010:005 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

010:006 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

010:007 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

010:008 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

010:009 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

010:010 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

010:011 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

010:012 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

010:013 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

010:014 **And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.**

Yes, we should counter heresies. But that does not mean there should be wars over them. Notice the following parable told by Jesus.

Matthew

013:024 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

013:025 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

013:026 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

013:027 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

013:028 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

013:029 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

013:030 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Jesus then explained the parable.

Matthew

013:036 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

013:037 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

013:038 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

013:039 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

013:040 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; So, shall it be in the end of this world.

Jesus also warned heresies would arise in the church. In the parable of verses 31-32, He likens the church to a mustard tree. The birds are Satan's heretics or heresies. (Note: In the parable of the sower in Mark 4, Jesus likens the birds to Satan. So, this is the understanding here too.)

In verses 33-35, heresies are likened to leaven.

Matthew

013:031 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

013:032 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, So, that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

013:033 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

013:034 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

013:035 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

Issues – Blasphemy Laws

There are some countries, both Muslim and secular, which have laws against blasphemy. Basically the laws state that one cannot say anything contrary to a religion or its holy people. Those in violation of the laws can be sent to prison or even executed. But what does the bible say about it?

One relevant passage is below. Notice especially verses 31 and 32.

Matthew

012:024 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

012:025 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

012:026 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?

012:027 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.

012:028 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

012:029 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

012:030 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

012:031 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

012:032 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

Did Jesus say that blasphemers should be executed or imprisoned? No.

One other note. Some theologians say this caution was only meant for people at the time of Jesus because that is the only time that sin could have been committed.

It should be noted the even reading parts of the Koran aloud could be seen as blasphemy to a Christian. And the following bible passages could be seen as blasphany to a Muslim.

Galations

001:008 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

001:009 As we said before, So, say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

1 John

004:001 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

004:002 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

004:003 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Notice in the above passage the phrase, "Jesus is come in the flesh" means Jesus, as God, took on human form. This is contrary to the teaching in the Koran. This bible passage also states that those who confess or teach otherwise are not of God. So, this is saying that Mohammad was not from God. So, reading this bible passage could be considered blasphemy to a Muslim.

Issues – Summary of Morality Laws

Some dismiss Christians and biblical teaching saying it is full of hate. That is a very sad statement about the behavior of Christians. There are a couple things to note.

First, most people who say they are Christian really are not. Some join churches because they want to be in a social group. Others 'play' Christian just in case what the bible says is true – although they really do not believe or follow its teachings.

Second, many, perhaps most, Christians are what the bible calls 'carnal Christians'. These are people who are born again Christians but would rather please their earthly desires rather than do what God desires, as the following passage discusses

1 Corinthians

003:001 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

003:002 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

003:003 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

But what is the summary of morality laws, and in fact, all laws?

Matthew

022:034 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

022:035 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

022:036 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

022:037 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

022:038 This is the first and great commandment.

022:039 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

022:040 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

So the basis of all law is love for God first, and love of people second. Love is not self satisfaction. Love is not lust.

Issues – Healthcare a Right?

In 2017 there were discussions on whether healthcare is a right or a privilege. What does the Bible teach about this? Are there any biblical principles about national healthcare? There seems to be 3 issues – charity, rights, and social considerations.

Charity

The following is a parable that Jesus taught about charity.

Luke

- 010:025 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?
- 010:026 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?
- 010:027 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.
- 010:028 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.
- 010:029 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?
- 010:030 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.
- 010:031 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.
- 010:032 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.
- 010:033 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,
- 010:034 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.
- 010:035 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.
- 010:036 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?
- 010:037 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Notice that the Samaritan did not ask about the man's politics, religion, etc. He just helped him. The point is, we are to be kind and charitable to others.

But there is nothing about it being a person's right to health care. So, are there other passages?

Rights

Notice the following story about Jesus

Mark

- 006:004 But Jesus, said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.
- 006:005 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

Matthew

013:057 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

013:058 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

So Jesus only healed those who believed. If healthcare was a right, then why didn't Jesus heal everyone? Yes, the passage says 'he could there do no mighty work'. But that was a self-limitation because, as the bible says,

Matthew

019:026 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Once again the point is, if healthcare is a right, then should not Jesus heal all?

Another relevant passage is below.

2 Thessalonians

003:010 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

2 Thessalonians

003:011 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

003:012 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

Which is more needful, food or healthcare? Now if the bible says those who will not work should not eat, then should those who refuse work be entitled to healthcare? So, if a person is not entitled to free food (per the bible), then should a person be entitled to free healthcare? So, is free healthcare a right?

Yes, people should be kind and charitable. But it is not biblical to say healthcare is a 'right'.

Social Considerations

What I am writing in this section is not biblical. It is just my opinion.

Some illnesses like the flu are highly contagious and affect the population as a whole. For example, it is important that before the flu season starts, everyone gets a flu shot. This is in part because, as of this writing, flu shots only reduce your chance of catching the illness. So, if it benefits everyone in society that everyone gets a flu shot, perhaps the government should provide free immunizations to everyone who wants one. This could reduce the change that each of us would catch the illness. Similarly, it benefits society as a whole that other types of immunizations be provided free to encourage people to get them and reduce spreading it to the rest of the population.

So there is practical side to health care as well.

Issues – Housing a Right?

In 2019, one congresswoman stated, “What are we doing to make sure housing is being legislated as a human right?” and “It means our access and our ability and our guarantee to having a home comes before someone else’s privilege to earn a profit.” So, is housing a right? Should those build homes, including the contractors, be required to forfeit a profit?

The issue of whether housing is a right is similar to the issue of whether health care is a right and is covered in the section entitled Issues – Healthcare.

Regarding pay for labor, Jesus said

Luke

010:007 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

The bible contains a few more passages on this topic.

1 Timothy

005:018 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

1 Corinthians

009:007 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

009:008 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

009:009 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

009:010 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

The next question is whether a contractor or developer deserves a profit for building housing? But is not that their work? See the section Issues – Borrowing, Interest and Usury. It points out that interest on some kinds of loans is fine.

Issues – Rationing Healthcare

Please read the chapters entitled, “Issues – Discrimination/Favoritism/Racism” and “Issues – Is Healthcare a Right” before reading this section. Those chapters pointed out that the bible speaks out against racism. It also pointed out that the bible does not support the suggestion that healthcare is a right.

Currently in this country, healthcare is provided to people who can afford it. If a person does not have money to visit a doctor or purchase medicine, they cannot get those services. There are of course exceptions such as Medicaid. So, this is the primary way healthcare is rationed in the US.

There are times such as in the covid-19 pandemic when some resources, such as medicine, may be in short supply. So, the question then is how to prioritize it. Generally, doctors in hospitals ration care on need – who is the most critical with a chance to survive. Because things like age, weight, and diabetes increased the risk of severe infection, priority was given to those patients.

But (per a Fox News article from Jan 2022) some states like Minnesota and New York added race as a risk factor, stating that ‘systematic’ racism endangered the health of non-White Americans. And the US administration (the President) agreed. So, medicines were in part rationed based on race, keeping European Americans at a lower priority. The idea was to help disadvantaged people.

Some believed non-White Americans had an increased risk of dying from covid. A January 2022 news article partly supported this by reporting African Americans were 4 times more likely to die of covid than Asian Americans, 3 times more likely to die than Hispanic Americans, and 2 times more likely to die than European Americans. But this also means that European Americans are more likely to die from covid than Hispanic or Asian Americans. The news article did not say if these numbers were adjusted for other factors such as weight, diabetes, etc. But the implication was that the racial profiling against European Americans was wrong.

There were several other problems with this. One is the validity of the ‘systematic racism’ claim in 2022. Another was how using race was a way to help disadvantaged people. For example, are all African Americans disadvantaged? Are all Asian Americans disadvantaged? Is not this racial profiling? Is not this racism, which the bible condemns? And the statement that minorities have a greater chance of dying raises the question, is there another way to tell without considering race? The issue should be who needs the care the most, not who is the person.

There is more to the issue of rationing healthcare than this. This was just an attempt to point out some considerations.

Issues – Slavery – Part 1 – Overview

One may think that this issue is very simple. But the bible takes multiple views of this issue and So, it is important to cover each of them, some of which may, on the surface, seem to contradict each other.

It is important to remember that the bible does not contradict itself. That would imply God has lied, which He cannot. So, if one thinks there is a contradiction, then they have the wrong interpretation.

Because the bible discusses multiple views of slavery, it is helpful to have a brief overview or summary of what the bible discusses. This will help keep everything in perspective.

The following summarizes key issues/perspectives.

1. The bible condemns slavery in no uncertain terms (Exodus 21:16, 1 Timothy 1:9-10). It then repeats the condemnation for Hebrews who would enslave other Hebrews. (Deuteronomy 24:7).
2. The bible says we should love our neighbor as we love ourself (Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 19:19, Matthew 22:37-39, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 10:27, Romans 13:9, Galatians 5:14, James 2:8). So, it seems inconsistent with these passages to have slaves.
3. The Hebrew word for “slave” is the same word for “servant”. One must tell from the context in which it is used to determine if the passage is talking about slaves or servants. Sometimes there are conflicts between translations as a result. For example, the King James Version of 1611 and the New International Version conflict in many places in Exodus 21. I believe the KJV has a better translation of that chapter.
4. God sometimes allowed a people/nation to go into slavery as punishment for turning their backs on Him (Deuteronomy 28).
5. God commanded that thieves be sold as indentured servants (or slaves?) So, they could pay off their debts (Exodus 22:2-3).
6. God sometimes punished nations who placed Hebrews in slavery (Amos 1:9-10, Jeremiah 34:8-22).
7. God allowed the Hebrews to buy slaves/indentured-servants from foreign countries (but not Hebrew slaves). The question is why this exception.
8. It appears Hebrews were allowed to enslave people of foreign nations that attacked them Deuteronomy 20:10-20). Also, unlike Hebrew slaves who were released in a “Year of Jubilee” (Leviticus 25:39-43), foreign indentured servants (heathens) could be kept for life (Leviticus 25:44-46). This exception is partially explained by the teaching in Deuteronomy 28, that people who turn their back on God might be punished by God by allowing them being enslaved. And Leviticus 25:44-46 speaks of the heathen.
9. Hebrew men were allowed to marry women who were captured in war (Deuteronomy 21:10-14). The passage does not refer to them as slaves.
10. Servants who fled their masters to another home were not to be returned by that home (Deuteronomy 23:15-16). Presumably this was to protect a servant from a wicked master.
11. The New Testament Epistles encourage slaves and servants to be faithful to their masters in order to lead them to a saving faith (Titus 2:9-10) and others). It also states that masters treat their slaves/servants as brothers (Philemon 1:16).

These passages will be looked at in more detail in the following sections/chapters.

Issues – Slavery – Part 2 – Forced Enslavement

The bible generally teaches against forced servitude. But there were a few exceptions, such as prisoners of war and thieves.

Slavery Verses Indentured Servitude

Some people point to Leviticus 25:44-46 as proof God approved of slavery, at least for the nation of Israel. But did He? To understand this passage, it is best to look at it in context with the verses before and after it.

Leviticus

025:035 And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

025:036 Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.

025:037 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.

025:038 I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.

025:039 And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant:

025:040 But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubile.

025:041 And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.

025:042 For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen.

025:043 Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God.

025:044 Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.

025:045 Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession.

025:046 And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.

025:047 And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family:

025:048 After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him:

025:049 Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself.

025:050 And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of jubile: and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years, according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him.

025:051 If there be yet many years behind, according unto them he shall give again the price of his redemption out of the money that he was bought for.

025:052 And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubile, then he shall count with him, and according unto his years shall he give him again the price of his redemption.

025:053 And as a yearly hired servant shall he be with him: and the other shall not rule with rigour over him in thy sight.

025:054 And if he be not redeemed in these years, then he shall go out in the year of jubile, both he, and his children with him.

025:055 For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God

You may first notice that verses 44-46 do not have the word 'slave' in them. Instead, they have the old English word 'bondman' in them. In this case, I agree that the King James Version of the bible has a better translation than the newer versions which use the word 'slave'.

The Hebrew word translated to 'slave' in newer translations can mean servant, or one who is under the authority of someone else. So, what kind of 'slave' is being talked about in verses 44-46. Notice the preceding verses are talking about poor Hebrews who sometimes sell themselves as indentured servants. The verses following this passage are also talking about indentured servants. So, verses 44-46 are also talking about indentured servants, not slaves. The difference is that in verses 44-46, these people are foreigners and not Hebrews. God prescribed different rules for them. But these people got into bondage because they were either poor or were captured in battle and agreed to being a bondman rather than being killed. That is why I believe the KJV translation for these verses is better than the newer translations.

To many, it may seem cruel or greedy that parents would want their children to go into servitude to a wealthier family. But looking at modern day events may help people understand. As of this writing, many children from Central and South America are migrating by themselves, without parents, to the United States. Many only have a telephone number of a relative who could take care of them in the US. These people are desperately poor. Loving parents are often willing – out of love – to give up their children if there is a chance their children will have a better life with another family. Separations like this are painful. But the alternative of starvation, or a life of barely scraping by, is often seen as a worse alternative.

God Condemns Slavery

God commanded those who make slaves of others be put to death. Notice especially the first passage which condemns both enslaving and ownership of slaves.

Exodus

021:016 And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

Deut

024:007 If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die; and thou shalt put evil away from among you.

Many years later, Tyre is condemned for engaging in slave trade.

Amos

001:009 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant:

001:010 But I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces thereof.

And there was a time when God punished Israel for not releasing their Hebrew indentured servants.

In the following passage, God, thru His prophet, Jeremiah, proclaims judgement on masters who failed to free their Hebrew indentured servants during the Sabbath Year. Read it carefully. Notice in verses 8-10, God instructed them to

release their Hebrew slaves because they failed to do it during the Sabbath Year. They comply. Then verse 11 mentions these masters enslaved the freed servants. Verses 12-16 summaries what happened. In verses 17-31, God pronounces judgement on them for enslaving the Hebrews.

Jeremiah

- 034:008 This is the word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them;
- 034:009 That every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, being an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve himself of them, to wit, of a Jew his brother.
- 034:010 Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should let his manservant, and every one his maidservant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more, then they obeyed, and let them go.
- 034:011 But afterward they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids.
- 034:012 Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,
- 034:013 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying,
- 034:014 At the end of seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear.
- 034:015 And ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name:
- 034:016 But ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids.
- 034:017 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.
- 034:018 And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof,
- 034:019 The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf;
- 034:020 I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.
- 034:021 And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone up from you.
- 034:022 Behold, I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant

The apostle Paul also wrote condemning it

1 Timothy

- 001:009 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

001:010 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

The word translated (in the KJV bible) at 'menstealers' in verse 10 above, is translated from the Greek word 'andrapodistais' which means, according to Strong, 'An enslaver, one who forcibly enslaves, a kidnapper. From a derivative of a compound of aner and pous; an enslaver'. So, this Greek word does not mean 'servant' or 'kidnapper'. It means enslaver and complements Exodus 21:20.

These passages clearly and directly condemn slavery. If another passage seems to approve of slavery, then there is a misinterpretation of it. Remember, the bible cannot contradict itself. If one thinks there is a contradiction, then one has a wrong interpretation.

Some have argued that passages like Exodus 21:20 above refer to kidnapping only. However, this verse is not talking about kidnapping for ransom. It is talking about kidnapping or 'stealing' for the purpose of slavery. Why was it phrased this way? Because the Hebrew word for 'slave' is the same word as used for 'servant'. The wording of Exodus 21:20 make is clear this is about slavery. And the passage in 1 Timothy 1:9-10 confirms this. 1 Timothy was written in Greek and clearly refers to slavery.

On passages regarding servitude and slavery, it is good to compare the King James Version with the New International Version. They sometimes conflict. The reason seems that the Hebrew word for 'slave' can also be translated as 'servant' or the old English term 'bondman'. So, it is important for a translator to look at the entire passage, and related passages, to determine what is the best translation. In these cases, I believe the KJV has the better translation.

Some claim that Israel religious authorities 3000+ years ago interpreted some passages as meaning God approved slavery and that is how Israel functioned. That may be true, I do not know. But that does not change the wording of the passages of the bible which condemn it.

Jesus's Teaching Regarding Human Slavery

Perhaps the passages which most condemns slavery are from Jesus Himself.

Matthew

022:034 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

022:035 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

022:036 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

022:037 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

022:038 This is the first and great commandment.

022:039 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

022:040 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

This story is also recored in Mark.

Mark

012:028 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

012:029 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

012:030 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

012:031 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

012:032 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:

012:033 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

Notice also what that scribe said about loving one's neighbor in Mark 12:33.

Jesus taught the same thing in the following passage. But this time, a person asked, who is their neighbor So, it is longer. (This is probably a different, but similar, story than the one in Matthew or Mark.)

Luke

010:025 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

010:026 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

010:027 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

010:028 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

010:029 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

010:030 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

010:031 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

010:032 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

010:033 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

010:034 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

010:035 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

010:036 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

010:037 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

In these passages, Jesus teaches us to love our neighbor as (as much as) ourselves. And He taught that everyone is our neighbor. It is good to remember that Samaritans were looked down upon by the Jewish people back then.

This teaching is mentioned in other New Testament books.

Acts

010:034 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

010:035 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Romans

002:011 For there is no respect of persons with God.

In summary, we are to love all people as ourselves.

So is slavery, the forcing of someone into servitude against their will, love? Do people place others into slavery out of love? No. We would not want to be enslaved. So, neither should we enslave anyone else per Jesus's teaching.

Remember, the bible cannot contradict itself. So, if there are passages that seem to conflict with these, then there is a wrong interpretation or application of them.

Indentured Servants

There are some other passages discussing 'slavery' but they are actually referring to indentured servitude. There is a passage in one of the Gospels which tells slaves not to run away. But it does not say it approves slavery.

Now notice the following passage which discusses a blessing in the Millenium Kingdom to come.

Isaiah

065:021 And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

065:022 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

What does this imply about slavery?

So, what are some of these other passages? One story starts in Genesis chapter 37. The story tells how Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery.

Genesis

037:026 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

037:027 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content.

037:028 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

But notice that this is simply reporting what the brothers did. *It does not state that God approved it!* Yes, God allowed it. But it does not say He approves it. Later in Genesis, God used it for the good of Israel because his family came to Egypt during the famine. The principle here is described in the following verse.

Romans

008:028 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

There are other passages which seem to refer to slavery but actually are talking about indentured servants. One such passage is:

Deuteronomy

015:012 And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

015:013 And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty:

015:014 Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.

The NIV translates the first part of verse 12 as 'sells himself to you'. The point is, sometimes the poor, needing cash, agreed to indentured servitude for a period of time. But it could be at most 7 years. There was an exception, and it was voluntary.

Deuteronomy

015:016 And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee;

015:017 Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise.

I am not sure why someone would want to do this. May be because it offered security in old age.

One exception was conquered cities during a war. Please note that this rule was given to the nation Israel 3500 years ago because of their special circumstances. I do not believe it is meant for today.

Deuteronomy

020:010 When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.

020:011 And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee.

020:012 And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it:

020:013 And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword:

020:014 But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

020:015 Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.

This may seem harsh. But this was God's punishment for pagan nations which attacked Israel (as long as Israel was faithful to God).

A different fate awaited cities which were in the territory which God gave Israel, as described below.

Deuteronomy

020:016 But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth:

020:017 But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee:

020:018 That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; So, should ye sin against the LORD your God.

These commands were directed to the nation of Israel, not to us today.

There are other Bible passages which tell of the wickedness of these cities. And there are passages which state the people of these cities knew during the 40 years Israel were in the desert (after leaving Egypt) that they would be attacked by the Israelis. However, these city dwellers did not turn to God.

Does their utter destruction seem unfair and severe? Remember, this is God's universe. He is in control. He is patient and merciful. But there comes a time when God will deal with those who are in rebellion against Him. You may not like it. But everything is God's. And the Bible is filled with stories of nations which were judged and punished by God. And the Bible contains prophecies of the end times in which plagues and wars will destroy much of humanity – as a judgment of God against those who rebel against Him.

There are other passages in the Bible which tell slaves to return to their masters. Why? The passage is:

1 Timothy

006:001 Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.

This passage is not condoning slavery. Instead it is telling Christian slaves to be good servants So, that their pagan masters would not speak evil of the slave's faith. There are other passages where the apostle Paul (who wrote 1 Timothy) states he tries to live in a way to draw others to God. This passage is a continuation of that doctrine.

There are also some passages about slavery which seem to suggest God approved it. They are:

1 Timothy

006:002 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

Ephesians

006:005 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

006:006 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

006:007 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

006:008 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

006:009 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Colossians

003:022 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God;

003:023 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

003:024 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

003:025 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

004:001 Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

But the question is why was this written? Did God really approve it? No. And the following passage explains why those instructions were given to Christian slaves:

Titus

002:009 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

002:010 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

The NIV translates the end of verse 10 as 'will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive'. The point is that Christian slaves could put their faith in good light and maybe win their pagan masters to the saving faith. And, if their master was already a Christian, maybe the master would realize he was doing wrong. In any case, the Christian master was instructed to be good to his slaves.

So why was this written rather than stating the master should die, and stated in Exodus and Deuteronomy? I believe it was stated giving time to the master to study scriptures, repent and release the slaves.

Some others have stated that these New Testament verses refer to servants and not slaves, and they refer to the relationship between labor and management. Perhaps. But the point is the same.

An Exception

In Exodus 21, thieves were required to repay their victim 2-4 times what they stole. Sometimes the thieves did not have the funds to do that. In the following passage, God instructs that the thief should be sold to pay the debt. It does not say if this was as an indentured servant or a slave. It makes one wonder if the thief would be treated as a slave because criminals may try to escape their capture.

Exodus

022:002 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.

022:003 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

Why Did God Allow Slavery?

If God condemned slavery, why did He allow it? That is, why did He not prevent it from happening? I am not referring to indentured servants, or people who chose to remain indentured servants. But rather those who were taken into slavery?

One reason can be found in Deuteronomy chapter 28 and Leviticus chapter 26 when God declares the punishment that will befall the nation of Israel if it turns its back on God. Notice especially the following passages:

Deuteronomy

028:032 Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long; and there shall be no might in thine hand.

Deuteronomy

028:041 Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity.

Deuteronomy

028:068 And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.

So, God told the nation of Israel that God would allow them to go into slavery if they rejected Him. And there are many other terrible things that could happen to Israel if they reject God – slavery was just one of them.

But this does not mean that it is a good and righteous people/nation that would enslave the Jews. In fact, God often uses nations even more evil to do the punishing – before being punished themselves. The following is an illustration

Isaiah

010:005 O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

010:006 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

The following is another example. In verses 1-4, the prophet Habakkuk asks God why He allows Israel to go on sinning. God answers that He is setting up a nation to punish Israel. In chapter 2 God declares that that nation all also be judged.

Habakkuk

001:001 The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.

001:002 O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!

001:003 Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention.

001:004 Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.

001:005 Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvelously: for I will work a work in your days which ye will not believe, though it be told you.

001:006 For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not their's.

001:007 They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.

001:008 Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat.

001:009 They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand.

001:010 And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it.

001:011 Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power unto his god.

Why does God wait So, long to bring a people out of slavery?

The bible does not not have a definitive list of reasons stating why every group of slaves remained in slavery.

Why did God have the Israelis be slaves in Egypt until lead out by Moses?

Why did God allow European peasants to be serfs (little better than slaves)?

Why did God allow Africans be slaves in the US until 1865?

One, repeat, one possible reason is given in the following passage.

Exodus

020:001 And God spake all these words, saying,
 020:002 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
 020:003 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
 020:004 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.
 020:005 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;
 020:006 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

So, one possible, repeat, possible reason is that the people did not return to God for several generations.

Another possible reason is suggested in the passage below, when God spoke to Abraham.

Genesis

015:013 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;
 015:014 And also, that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.
 015:015 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.
 015:016 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

Some suggested that the reason why the Israelis were in Egypt So, long was

Keep them away from the corrupting influence of the Amorites

Give the Israelis time to become a large nation in safety

God wanted to give the Amorites more time to turn to Him before turning the land to the Israelies

So, when people are enslaved, it is often because they rejected God. We many not know why a people stay enslaved for a period. But God has a purpose for it.

Romans

008:028 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

God Has a Purpose

Romans

008:028 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

008:029 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

008:030 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Point is, we must trust God knowing "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose".

If you wonder why God allowed or caused something to happen, ask God, and consider what would have happened if God had not acted. What would be the net result of inaction? Seriously, think and pray thru it. But if one has any hatred or resentment, remove it first.

Do Not Gloat

There is a very real danger that some people may gloat over other peoples' problems. Or they may say, "they got what they deserved" in regards to slavery. No one should do this. Remember, when some tragedy occurs, one should see it as a lesson or warning. Remember:

2 Peter

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

Proverbs

024:017 Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

024:018 Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.

Obadiah

001:012 But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress.

001:013 Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity;

001:014 Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress.

001:015 For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.

Noah's Curse

The bible records the following story after the great flood.

Genesis

009:020 And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard:

009:021 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.

009:022 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.

009:023 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.

009:024 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.

009:025 And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

009:026 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

009:027 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

Some other bible translations use the word 'slave' instead of 'servant'. People have interpreted this to mean God approves of slavery. But notice that this passage does not say that. This passage only says that Noah made the curse.

Even if, as some claim, this was a curse which God would enforce, notice the following passage.

Deuteronomy

005:009 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me,

005:010 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

So, there is a limit on the number of generations God will punish that way – of those who hate Him.

Other Passages On Slavery

The previous passages were presented showing God does not approve of slavery. The following passages are also references to it in the bible. Actually, the KJV translation mostly uses the word 'bondage' or 'bondman' or bondwoman' instead of 'slave' or indentured servant. One must look carefully at the passage to know if it is speaking of a slave or servant. Also, in many cases, the bible is simply recording history without comment on whether God approved.

Story of Joseph

The story of Joseph is in Genesis chapters 37 to the end of the book. This records how Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and sold him into slavery. There is nothing in its telling that suggests God approved of it. It is simply a historical record of what happened.

And yes, God caused this to work out well in the end. As it is written,

Romans

008:028 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Story Of Israel Leaving Egypt

Exodus chapters 1-12 tell the story of the enslavement of the Hebrews when they were in Egypt. The story starts

Exodus

001:008 Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

001:009 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:

001:010 Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and So, get them up out of the land.

001:011 Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.

001:012 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

001:013 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:

001:014 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.

The word 'slave' is not used in this translation. But they were effectively slaves. Once again, there is nothing in it that suggests God approved of the enslavement, although it does indicate that God allowed it to happen for a period of time. And the story does not say why God allowed them to be enslaved. It does say that God delivered them out of slavery.

Abraham's Bondwoman

Actually, the KJV translation mostly uses the word 'bondage' or 'bondman' or bondwoman' instead of 'slave' or indentured servant. One must look carefully at the passage to know if it is speaking of a slave or servant. Also, in many cases, the bible is simply recording history without comment on whether God approved.

In the following passage, Abraham frees a 'bondwoman'. Nothing is said whether God approved of her bondage.

Genesis

021:002 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

021:003 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

021:004 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

021:005 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

021:006 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, So, that all that hear will laugh with me.

021:007 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.

021:008 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.

021:009 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

021:010 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

021:011 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

021:012 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

021:013 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

021:014 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

Sleeping With A Bondwoman

The book of Leviticus contains many laws for the Hebrews. The following is one for a man who sleeps with a female servant.

Leviticus

019:020 And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that is a bondmaid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

019:021 And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, even a ram for a trespass offering.

019:022 And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he hath done: and the sin which he hath done shall be forgiven him.

Gibeonite Deception and Bondage

When the Israelis went into Canaan, God told them to kill all heathens who did not vacate the land. Joshua chapter 9 tells a story of some cities who sent representatives to the Israelites telling them that they were from a far off land and asked for a treaty. The Israelis did not entreat God for direction and instead agreed to a treaty. After it was done, they discovered the deception. They could not break the treaty because it would be a sin. So, they forced the heathen into bondage. Notice the passage does not say if God approved. The following is the ending of the story.

Joshua

009:019 But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them.

009:020 This we will do to them; we will even let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we swore unto them.

009:021 And the princes said unto them, Let them live; but let them be hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation; as the princes had promised them.

009:022 And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us?

009:023 Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.

009:024 And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing.

009:025 And now, behold, we are in thine hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.

009:026 And So, did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not.

009:027 And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, in the place which he should choose.

King Solomon's Bondsmen

God commanded that the nation of Israel should exterminate all heathen peoples in Canaan who refused to leave. But in the following passage, King Solomon forced many into bondage instead. The passage does not say God approved.

1 Kings

009:020 And all the people that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel,

009:021 Their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bondservice unto this day.

009:022 But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen: but they were men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen.

Woman Grieves to Prophet Elisha

In the following passage, a woman is grieved because her sons will be taken as indentured servants to pay a debt.

2 Kings

004:001 Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.

Return From Babylon

The following passage is a prophecy of the Israelites return from Babylon. Notice how the Gentiles are to be servants of the Israelites. This is in keeping with Galatians 6:7, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Isaiah

014:001 For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

014:002 And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.

014:003 And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve,

014:004 That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!

Issues – Slavery – Part 3 - Indentured Servants

Indentured servants are people who agree to work for someone for a given period of time (days, weeks, months, or years) for a fixed payment. Some people like to refer to them as 'debt slaves', although they are really not slaves. The term 'slaves' imply that the person has no or very limited rights. For example, African American slaves, before they were freed by the American Civil War, had no rights. Could be bought and sold at will, even if it broke up families. They could be beaten or even killed without any penalty under law.

Many of the people who came to America came as indentured servants. These were people who wanted to come, but could not afford the passage. So, they agreed to be indentured servants to rich families who would pay for the voyage.

There are a few bible chapters regarding indentured servants which seem to confuse people. This write up looks at those chapters to see exactly what they are saying, keeping the verses about servitude in context with the rest of the chapter. This is not meant as a complete bible commentary. It simply highlights the verses on servitude and explains where needed.

It should be noted that the bible allowed indentured servitude, according to some rules.

Extreme Poverty

There seems to be confusion about the servitude laws that God gave to the nation of Israel in the book of Exodus. So, let's take a look at them.

But first, remember what life was like at that time. In some ways it resembles life today in third world countries. Many people are desperately poor. Many have no homes. No idea where their next meal is coming from. Cannot find meaningful employment. Needs to support a family but has nothing. Have you ever been in a place like that? I have.

I remember one mother asking my wife and me to adopt her only son So, he could have a better life. That is desperation. And she and her husband had a home. They just wanted a better life for their son.

Living in the US is can be hard to understand that kind of life. So, when one reads the servitude laws in Exodus and other portions of the Old Testament, please keep this in mind.

Exodus 21

There has been some confusion about Exodus chapter 21. Many non-Christians have ridiculed Christianity for what they claim is an endorsement of slavery and sex slavery – which of course is false. So, it is important to look at this chapter verse by verse to understand what it is really saying.

Now let's look at the first 6 verses of Exodus 21.

Exodus

021:001 Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them.

021:002 If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.

021:003 If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.

021:004 If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.

021:005 And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free:

021:006 Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.

In verse 2, who is selling the Hebrew servant? Certainly not someone who enslaved him because that violates the following passages and they would be put to death.

Exodus

021:016 And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

Deut

024:007 If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die; and thou shalt put evil away from among you.

Many years later, Tyre is condemned for engaging in slave trade.

Amos

001:009 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant:

001:010 But I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces thereof.

So, it is the desperately poor who might sell themselves as an indentured servant. Remember, people who have nothing, no prospect of a job, no prospect of a loan, may be willing to agree to be an indentured servant. It is these people the verse speaks about.

Now the verse does allow the master to sell the debt to another person, moving the indentured servant to another master.

Also notice verse 2 commends that the indentured servant be released from his debt and go free after 6 years. This is another reason why the passage is talking about servants and not slave.

Verse 3 continues the instructions of the release, specifying the wife is to be release from her debt too.

Verses 4-6 require more study because there is some symbolism here. Yes, these verses specify what the Hebrews were to do in that set of circumstances. But there is another meaning here too. First, it is important to remember that the nation of Israel was to be a nation of priests.

Exodus

019:005 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

019:006 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

And many people did come from surrounding nations to learn of the Hebrew God.

Now notice the following passage.

Psalm

040:006 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

040:007 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,

040:008 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

The phrase, 'mine ears hast thou opened' refers back to Exodus 21:6. Then notice the following passage.

Hebrews

010:001 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

010:002 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

010:003 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

010:004 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

010:005 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, **but a body hast thou prepared me**:

010:006 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

010:007 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

010:008 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

010:009 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

010:010 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

010:011 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

010:012 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

010:013 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

So, Psalm 40, has a reference to a ritual in Exodus 21:6 and has a reference to Jesus as described in Hebrews 10. Why was the reference to ear piercing left out of Hebrews? Probably because it was not relevant to what Paul was writing about. Why did Hebrews paraphrase Psalm 40? Probably for emphasis.

So, what does this symbolism mean? First, consider what it would be like 3000+ years ago when you see a man walk down the street with a hole in his ear. It meant that he loved his wife and children so much that he was willing to be a servant for the rest of his life in order to stay with her. It was a sacrifice for that man.

Now consider what Jesus has done for us. He needed to be human to be our substitute and He sacrificed Himself that we can live in Him. (Remember, there are several other places in the bible in which God compares His love for us to that of a man for a woman – not in a sexual way, but in a loving emotional way.) Now notice that Hebrews 10:5 relates to Psalm 40:6 with one noticeable exception. The reference to the ear is missing in Hebrews. That is because instead, Jesus needed a human body to be as sacrifice. That is why Hebrews has, "but a body hast thou prepared me" and Psalm 40:6 refers to only the ear.

Verses 7-11 contain a passage that is confusing to many. It reads,

Exodus

021:007 And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do.

021:008 If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her.

021:009 And if he have betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters.

021:010 If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish.

021:011 And if he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money.

Why would a man sell his daughter? First, it needs to be pointed out that this must have been agreeable with the daughter otherwise the man would be executed per the following verse.

Exodus

021:016 And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

So then why would the man do this? Why would the daughter agree to this? To answer these questions, it is important to remember that it would be the desperately poor people who might do this. People who have nothing. People who are probably starving. It is an act of desperation. It is also important to remember, this is indentured servitude, not slavery, and it is for a maximum of 6 years.

The daughter may agree for a couple different reasons. First, she was guaranteed food and clothes and a place to sleep. And second, it would help her family. This second point may be hard to understand in modern countries. But it is easier to understand if you ever visited people in a third world country. Those countries have no government pensions, no free medical, no welfare, no food stamps. In those countries, having an extended family is essential. That is, it is vital for people to help out extended family members because that is the only place where they can hope to get help in return. So, children are brought up understanding this, and brought up to be part of the extended family system.

The 'purchase' is more in line with a dowry.

Regarding the daughter marrying the master or the master's son... Remember, this 'transaction' can only occur if the daughter agrees to it. One may ask why she would be willing to marry someone under these conditions. Once again, it is important to remember the mind set of someone who is desperately poor. Many women would be happy to marry someone who could provide lifetime financial security. This may be hard for people in the US to understand. But if you met poor women in third world countries, it would be easy to understand. These women are not looking for great love. They are looking for security and not having to worry about where their next meal is coming from.

Verse 8 talks about pleasing her master. It does not say if this is before or after a marriage. I suspect it is before. She is protected from her debt being sold to a foreign nation which may have different laws.

Verses 9-11 describe other protections that the lady would have.

Verses 12-19 are for the entire population, not just for servants. They are as follows.

Exodus

021:012 He that smiteth a man, So, that he die, shall be surely put to death.

021:013 And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee.

021:014 But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die.

021:015 And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death.

021:016 And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

021:017 And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.

021:018 And if men strive together, and one smite another with a stone, or with his fist, and he die not, but keepeth his bed:

021:019 If he rise again, and walk abroad upon his staff, then shall he that smote him be quit: only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall cause him to be thoroughly healed.

Just want to highlight certain passages...

Notice verse 12 authorizes capital punishment. No exceptions are listed for lack of intelligence or for sanity.

Notice verse 16 condemns slavery. Remember, the Hebrew word for slave is the same as the Hebrew word for servant. So, when one translates a passage with that word, one must consider the context in which it is used. And because the bible does not contradict itself (because contradictions imply God would lie), this passage does not contain that word. Instead, it refers to 'stealing' and 'selling' someone which is slavery. This passage is not merely talking about kidnapping for ransom because nothing is said of ransom. It is talking of stealing/kidnapping and selling someone which is slavery. So, when one reads other passages that contain the Hebrew word for slave/servant, know that the bible condemns slavery and if the passage gives instructions, they are for servants because slavery is condemned.

Notice verses 18-19. Some believe they only refer to the treatment of servants. But notice nothing is said about servants or slaves in them. These verses apply to everyone.

Verses 20-21 address what would happen if a master injures a servant.

Exodus

021:020 And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished.

021:021 Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money.

There has been some controversy with these verses by non-Christians. Some claim the punishment is too light and it gives slave owners the right to beat slaves. One major failing with that reasoning is that verse 16 condemns slavery and slave owners were to be executed.

These verses are very similar to verses 18-19 which apply to the general population. In verses 18-19, if someone is injured by another, the injured person is to be compensated for lost work. In verses 20-21, the indentured servant is not compensated because they agreed to work a given period of time for a given price – they already were paid for the lost time. The servant's master pays nothing additional because they lost the value of the servant's work during that time.

The read may not like or agree with the punishment. But it is consistent with the general population.

Verses 22-25 addresses punishment if someone injures a pregnant woman. Notice these verses are for the general population and can apply for servants also.

Exodus

021:022 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, So, that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine.

021:023 And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,

021:024 Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

021:025 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Verses 26-27 address the punishment if a master injures an indentured servant.

Exodus

021:026 And if a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake.

021:027 And if he smite out his manservant's tooth, or his maidservant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake.

These punishments are in addition to those described in verse 24-25 above. Punishments are intended to prevent a crime from occurring and those listed in verses 26-27 do that. They also free the servant from the master, freeing them from a dangerous person and location. The reader may think a different punishment is better. But that is not for me to say or question.

Verses 28-31 discusses what should be done if an animal injures someone in the general population.

Exodus

021:028 If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit.

021:029 But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death.

021:030 If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him.

021:031 Whether he have gored a son, or have gored a daughter, according to this judgment shall it be done unto him.

Verse 29 is specific to servants

Exodus

021:032 If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

That is, if an ox gored a (indentured) servant, the owner of the ox would pay 20 silver shekels to the master for the loss of the work the servant would have produced. The punishments of verses 28-31 still applies in these cases.

Verses 33-36 apply to the general public.

Exodus

021:033 And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein;

021:034 The owner of the pit shall make it good, and give money unto the owner of them; and the dead beast shall be his.

021:035 And if one man's ox hurt another's, that he die; then they shall sell the live ox, and divide the money of it; and the dead ox also they shall divide.

021:036 Or if it be known that the ox hath used to push in time past, and his owner hath not kept him in; he shall surely pay ox for ox; and the dead shall be his own.

Leviticus 25

Verses 1-7 discuss rules for the Sabbath Year. It was a year of rest for the land.

Leviticus

025:001 And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,

025:002 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD.

025:003 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;

025:004 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.

025:005 That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.

025:006 And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee.

025:007 And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

Notice verse 6 specifies it is for all people in the land.

Verses 8-17 discuss the Year of Jubilee. People never lost possession of their land forever. If someone 'sold' their land, it really was they were leasing their land. Every 49th year, the land was returned to the original owner.

Leviticus

025:008 And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

025:009 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

025:010 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

025:011 A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.

025:012 For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

025:013 In the year of this jubile ye shall return every man unto his possession.

025:014 And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another:

025:015 According to the number of years after the jubile thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee:

025:016 According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee.

025:017 Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the LORD your God.

Verses 18-22 contain more instructions for the Sabbath Year.

Leviticus

025:018 Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety.

025:019 And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.

025:020 And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase:
025:021 Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.
025:022 And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store.

Verses 23-34 discuss 'redeeming' (getting back) a possession before the year of Jubilee.

Leviticus

025:023 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.
025:024 And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land.
025:025 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.
025:026 And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it;
025:027 Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession.
025:028 But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubile: and in the jubile it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession.
025:029 And if a man sell a dwelling house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year may he redeem it.
025:030 And if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the walled city shall be established for ever to him that bought it throughout his generations: it shall not go out in the jubile.
025:031 But the houses of the villages which have no wall round about them shall be counted as the fields of the country: they may be redeemed, and they shall go out in the jubile.
025:032 Notwithstanding the cities of the Levites, and the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time.
025:033 And if a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession, shall go out in the year of jubile: for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel.
025:034 But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold; for it is their perpetual possession.

Verses 35-38 discuss lending to the poor when the borrower plans to repay the lender.

Leviticus

025:035 And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.
025:036 Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.
025:037 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.
025:038 I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.

Verses 39-43 discuss some of the rules governing Hebrew indentured servants.

Leviticus

025:039 And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant:
025:040 But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubile.

025:041 And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.

025:042 For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen.

025:043 Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God.

Notice these verses command the master to be compassionate towards Hebrew indentured servants. And they were to be released in the Year of Jubilee.

Verses 44-46 discusses who could be permanently enslaved (kept permanently as an indentured servant).

Leviticus

025:044 Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.

025:045 Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession.

025:046 And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.

This appears to be a particularly troubling passage. Why would God allow people from other nations be kept forever as servants/slaves and not the Hebrews? To understand this, it may be helpful to go to Deuteronomy chapter 28, and remember the above passage talked about heathen. The entire chapter is listed below So, the reader can see the key passages in the context of the entire chapter. The key passages have been highlighted.

Deuteronomy

028:001 And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

028:002 And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

028:003 Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.

028:004 Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

028:005 Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.

028:006 Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

028:007 The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

028:008 The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

028:009 The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.

028:010 And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee.

028:011 And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

028:012 The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

- 028:013 And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:
- 028:014 And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.
- 028:015 **But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:**
- 028:016 Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.
- 028:017 Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.
- 028:018 Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.
- 028:019 Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.
- 028:020 The LORD shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.
- 028:021 The LORD shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it.
- 028:022 The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.
- 028:023 And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.
- 028:024 The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.
- 028:025 The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.
- 028:026 And thy carcase shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away.
- 028:027 The LORD will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.
- 028:028 The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart:
- 028:029 And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee.
- 028:030 Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof.
- 028:031 Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them.
- 028:032 **Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long; and there shall be no might in thine hand.**
- 028:033 The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed away:
- 028:034 So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.
- 028:035 The LORD shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.

- 028:036 The LORD shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.
- 028:037 And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.
- 028:038 Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in; for the locust shall consume it.
- 028:039 Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them, but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them.
- 028:040 Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast his fruit.
- 028:041 **Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity.**
- 028:042 All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.
- 028:043 The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.
- 028:044 He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.
- 028:045 Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:
- 028:046 And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.
- 028:047 Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;
- 028:048 Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.
- 028:049 The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;
- 028:050 A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:
- 028:051 And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.
- 028:052 And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.
- 028:053 And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:
- 028:054 So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave:
- 028:055 So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates.
- 028:056 The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter,
- 028:057 And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.
- 028:058 If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD;

- 028:059 Then the LORD will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.
- 028:060 Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee.
- 028:061 Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.
- 028:062 And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.
- 028:063 And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; So, the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.
- 028:064 And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.
- 028:065 And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:
- 028:066 And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:
- 028:067 In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.
- 028:068 **And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you**

So, God allowed those (the heathen) who turn their back on Him to be taken into captivity and become slaves, not mere servants.

And who were those slaves that the Hebrews kept? They fall into several categories.

1. Some were heathen prisoners of war who were not executed. (Remember, God allowed those who turn their back on Him to be taken into captivity and become slaves, not mere servants.)
2. Some were Gentiles (non-Hebrews) who sold themselves into servitude (permanent indentured servants). They did not have the same protections as Hebrews. The bible does not say why. Perhaps it is because they were probably heathen.
3. Some were Hebrew indentured servants who, contrary to law, were never released

Let's go into point 1 above in more detail. Notice the following passage which discusses war. The Israeli wars can be placed into 2 categories. The first category are the wars to conquer and possess the land of Canaan (Palestine). The second category of wars are those to defend it from attacks by neighboring nations. Verses 10-15 discusses how to treat captives from category 2 wars. Verses 16-20 discuss how to treat people in category 1 wars – the battles to conquer Canaan.

If you feel this is cruel, it is important to remember a couple things. First, the people living in Canaan knew for 40 years while the Hebrews were in the wilderness that the Hebrew God was real and the Hebrews were coming to take over the land. Only Rahab, the harlot, and her family believed the Hebrew God and were spared because of it. The other people could have turned to God and be saved but they chose not to be. Second, nations which attacked the Hebrew nation were heathen and therefore subject to God's judgement.

- 020:010 When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.
- 020:011 And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee.
- 020:012 And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it:
- 020:013 And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword:
- 020:014 But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.
- 020:015 Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.
- 020:016 But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth:
- 020:017 But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee:
- 020:018 That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; So, should ye sin against the LORD your God.
- 020:019 When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege:
- 020:020 Only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it be subdued

Some may question if Hebrew indentured servants were ever treated like slaves. The following passage gives an answer.

In the following passage, God, thru His prophet, Jeremiah, proclaims judgement on masters who failed to free their Hebrew indentured servants during the Sabbath Year. Read it carefully. Notice in verses 8-10, God instructed them to release their Hebrew slaves because they failed to do it during the Sabbath Year. They comply. Then verse 11 mentions these masters enslaved the freed servants. Verses 12-16 summaries what happened. In verses 17-31, God pronounces judgement on them for enslaving the Hebrews.

Jeremiah

- 034:008 This is the word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them;
- 034:009 That every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, being an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve himself of them, to wit, of a Jew his brother.
- 034:010 Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should let his manservant, and every one his maidservant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more, then they obeyed, and let them go.
- 034:011 But afterward they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids.
- 034:012 Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,
- 034:013 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying,
- 034:014 At the end of seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear.

- 034:015 And ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name:
- 034:016 But ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids.
- 034:017 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.
- 034:018 And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof,
- 034:019 The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf;
- 034:020 I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.
- 034:021 And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone up from you.
- 034:022 Behold, I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant

The following passage refers to marrying captive women.

Deuteronomy

- 021:010 When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive,
- 021:011 And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife;
- 021:012 Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house, and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails;
- 021:013 And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.
- 021:014 And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her.

Notice that the above passage refers to the women as captives, not slaves. And notice it refers to marriage. So, the woman would not be a slave. But did verse 13 give the man to rape the woman? I believe the wording, and Deuteronomy 22:23-29, would indicate that the marriage was mutually consented. So, what is this passage in Deuteronomy? It is in regards to rape.

Deuteronomy

- 022:023 If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her;
- 022:024 Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: So, thou shalt put away evil from among you.
- 022:025 But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her: then the man only that lay with her shall die.

022:026 But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even So, is this matter:

022:027 For he found her in the field, and *the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her.*

022:028 If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

022:029 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.

The difference between verses 23-27 and 28-29 is that in 23-27, it is a case of rape – the lady was in a field where no one could hear her cries, So, she should be considered the victim of rape. In verses 28-29, the couple is not in a field and it appears to be consensual.

Also, in Deuteronomy 21:10-14, where these heathen women? Notice the following passage.

Deuteronomy

007:001 When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

007:002 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

007:003 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

007:004 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: So, will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

So, it seems unlikely.

The passage below seems to be for a bondwoman that consensually slept with another man. This is different from the case just previously mentioned.

Leviticus

019:020 And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that is a bondmaid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

019:021 And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, even a ram for a trespass offering.

019:022 And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he hath done: and the sin which he hath done shall be forgiven him.

The following is another reason why someone could be sold into indentured servitude.

Exodus

022:001 If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.

022:002 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.

022:003 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

022:004 If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.

022:005 If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, shall he make restitution.

What is interesting is that if a servant fled his master to a different home, that person was not to return him – presumably because the first master was so wicked that the servant felt he had to flee.

Deuteronomy

023:015 Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee:

023:016 He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him.

Issues – Slavery – Part 4 - New Testament Epistles on Slavery

This is divided into 2 parts. This part lists the verses. Part 2 explains them

Some claim the New Testament Epistles endorses slavery because they tell slaves to serve their masters. Let's take a look at those passages.

Although most which will be quoted below refer to slaves, the following passage refers to servants – not slaves. The Greek word is 'oiketai' which means 'a household servant. From oikeo; a fellow resident, i.e. Menial domestic.' That Greek word does not mean slave. This passage is listed because some translations use the work 'slave' instead of servant.

1 Peter

- 002:018 Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.
 002:019 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.
 002:020 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.
 002:021 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

Now the following passages do refer to slaves. According to Strong, the Greek word, douloi, means '(as adj.) enslaved, (b) (as noun) a (male) slave. From deo; a slave' and that is the Greek word used in these passages. The passages are from the KJV translation of the bible and I believe should have used the work 'slave' instead of 'servant'.

Let's start with the passage in Philemon. In the following passage, Paul says he brought the runaway slave to faith in Jesus, just as he had brought the slave owner, Philemon, to faith. He then goes on to say that he convinced the slave to return to Philemon (verse 12).

Philemon

- 001:001 Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer,
 001:002 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:
 001:003 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
 001:004 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,
 001:005 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;
 001:006 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.
 001:007 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.
 001:008 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,
 001:009 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.
 001:010 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:
 001:011 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:
 001:012 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:
 001:013 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:

001:014 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.
 001:015 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;
 001:016 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?
 001:017 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.
 001:018 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;
 001:019 I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.
 001:020 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.
 001:021 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

Now go back and notice verse 16 above. Paul exhorts Philemon to receive the runaway as a brother, not a slave! Paul is not encouraging slavery. Paul goes on to say in verses 18-19 that he is willing to repay Philemon even though Philemon owes him more. Once again, the point is, Paul is sending the runaway back and tells Philemon to treat him as a brother.

The next question is why? Notice the following passage.

Titus

002:009 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;
 002:010 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Remember, one emphasis in the bible is bringing the lost to a saving faith and *Paul exhorts us to do what we can to lead people to Christ, as in the following passages.*

1 Corinthians

010:032 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:
 010:033 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

And again in

1 Corinthians

009:019 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.
 009:020 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;
 009:021 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.
 009:022 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.
 009:023 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

Many people are lead to Jesus by the good actions of Christians. In the same way, Christians leading bad lives cause non-believers to dismiss and mock the gospel. This is the reason why the following passage exhorts Christians who are slaves to work hard for their masters and bring them to faith.

1 Timothy

006:001 Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, **that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.**

006:002 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

006:003 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

006:004 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

006:005 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

The following passage is another which exhorts Christians slaves to work well for their masters, presumably for the same reasons as given above.

1 Corinthians

007:020 Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

007:021 Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.

007:022 For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.

Although the bible condemns slavery, it does exhort masters to be kind and good to those who work for them. Notice especially Colossians 4:1 below how it encourages masters to treat slaves 'just and equally' and reminds the master that he is also a slave of God – implying do unto others how you would have them do unto you.

Colossians

003:022 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God;

003:023 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

003:024 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

003:025 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

004:001 **Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal;** knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

Ephesians

006:005 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

006:006 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

006:007 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

006:008 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

006:009 And, **ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening;** knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

The following passage reminds us that we are all equal in God's sight, implying we should treat others equally.

Galatians

003:027 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

003:028 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

003:029 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise

Issues – Sin of Being White

Probably most people will say there is no sin in being a European American. However, there are some who say White people are guilty of many wrongs that occurred in the US and those Whites living today should feel guilty and ashamed of themselves for what other Whites did, even if none of their ancestors were responsible for those things.

Children Not Responsible For Sins of Their Fathers

First, notice the following verses. In each, God does not hold the children responsible for the sins of their fathers.

Ezekiel

018:001 The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,

018:002 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

018:003 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.

018:004 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, So, also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

018:005 But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right,

018:006 And hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman,

018:007 And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment;

018:008 He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man,

018:009 Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD.

018:010 If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that doeth the like to any one of these things,

018:011 And that doeth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife,

018:012 Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination,

018:013 Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.

018:014 Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like,

018:015 That hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife,

018:016 Neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment,

018:017 That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live.

018:018 As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity.

018:019 Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.

018:020 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

2 Kings

014:006 But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

2 Chronicles

025:004 But he slew not their children, but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.

Jeremiah

031:029 In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.

031:030 But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

Limits

We are not guilty of the sins of our ancestors if we do not practice those same sins.

Numbers

014:018 The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

Deuteronomy

005:008 Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth:

005:009 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me,

005:010 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

No Respector of Persons

The following passages tell us that God is no respector of persons. Wealth does not matter. Social position does not matter. Race does not matter. He regards all the same.

Point is, there is no guilt for being of a particular race.

Acts

010:034 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respector of persons:

010:035 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Romans

002:011 For there is no respect of persons with God.

Romans

010:012 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

010:013 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

1 Timothy

005:021 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

James

002:001 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

002:002 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

002:003 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

002:004 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

002:005 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

002:006 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

002:007 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

002:008 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

002:009 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

Summary

So, is there White Guilt? Is being White a sin? Do European Americans share in the sin and guilt for what happened in the past? No.

Remember, God is no respecter of persons. So, He does not hold us guilty because we are from a particular race. God also says we are not guilty of the sins of our ancestors if we do not engage in those activities ourselves.

As pointed out in other sections of this writing, God judges nations and peoples. God often uses people/nations that are more evil to punish other nations. God owns the earth and everything in it. We are only tenants. God warns us of the punishment He may inflict if we turn our backs on Him (see the section entitled, "Overview - National Blessings For Obeying God And Curses For Not"). These punishments include expulsion from the land and even enslavement. It does not mean a good nation will do this. The bible teaches that God often uses evil nations to do the punishing. But that does not mean that all people of that race are guilty of doing the punishment. And God says even the children are not guilty if they do not do the same things.

And it is sinful for people to claim everyone of a race shares the guilt, as indicated in

James

002:009 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

Issues – Work/Labor Laws

Living Wage

I know of no Bible passages talking about a living wage (being paid enough to live on). However, there are some passages with speak to being paid.

Deuteronomy

025:004 Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.

So an ox should be allowed to eat until it is full. Notice the next passage states the passage also applies to people.

1 Corinthians

009:009 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.

Doth God take care for oxen?

009:010 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

So if an ox can eat its fill, and this verse also applies to people, should a person be able to earn enough to live on?

The next verse is interesting. If a person is to regard the life of his beast of burden (such as a ox or horse), then should not employers should regard (be concerned about) the lives of their workers? Should not people regard others more than animals?

Proverbs

012:010 A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel

Colossians

004:001 Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

This passage is a reminder that some day, God will require each of us to give Him an account of our activities on earth. Employers will have to give an account of how they treated their employees.

The following passage also seems relevant. Unfortunately, the King James Version from year 1611 uses terms no longer in common use.

Proverbs

022:022 Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate:

022:023 For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

The newer NIV translation uses the term “do not exploit the poor” instead of “Rob not the poor”, although the New Kings James version still uses the term “rob”. I cannot read ancient languages So, I rely on translations. I suspect the term “rob” is correct. But I believe the term “exploit” gives a good feel for the verse. The basic idea of the passage is we should not take advantage of the poor. One way this has been done historically is by employers giving pay that is

insufficient to live on, and forcing the poor masses to accept any wage they can find. But once again, it today's society, do all jobs have to have a living wage? Should teenagers wanting 'spend money' and working part time jobs be paid the same as older, full time workers? I have no comment on that.

Pay Workers Full Amount and Pay When Due

There are 2 things for which God criticizes the rich – how they get money and how they spend money. The following criticizes people who do not (1) pay promised wages or (2) pay wages late.

Jeremiah

022:013 Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work;

Leviticus

019:013 Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.

Deuteronomy

024:014 Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates:

024:015 At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.

James

005:004 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

Honesty in Business Dealings

The following passage talks of honesty when selling. But the more general principle is to be honest in all business dealings.

Leviticus

019:035 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure.

019:036 Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.

Issues – Nation of Israel

Do Not Harm Israel

Probably the most important Bible passage regarding the nation of Israel is when God made a promise to Abram.

Genesis

012:001 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

012:002 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

012:003 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

But that does not necessarily mean countries should always help Israel. For example, around 1040 BC, the nation was split in 2 kingdoms. Israel was the northern kingdom and Judah was the southern kingdom. At that time, Israel was heavily involved in idolatry while Judah was not. The nation of Judah agreed to help Israel in a battle. After the battle (which they lost), a prophet gave the following message to the king of Judah.

2 Chron

019:001 And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.

019:002 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

The point is, do not harm the Jewish nation but it may be wrong to help.

The Land of Canaan Promised to Israel

Genesis

017:003 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

017:004 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

017:005 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

017:006 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

017:007 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

017:008 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

So what is this land that was promised to Abram and his descendants?

Joshua

001:003 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

001:004 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

Actually, there are numerous Bible passages about this and they are very explicit. Several are listed below. Based on these, I think the land was the Israelis and will be the Israelis at some point in the future. But do the Israelis have a strong claim to the land now? When God wants all of the land to go back to the Jews, He will find a way to make it happen.

One of the earliest references to the promise is Genesis chapter 12, verses 6 & 7:

Genesis

12:6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

12:7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Promise Only Includes Israel

But was Ismael included in the covenant? Actually, no. In Genesis chapter 17, verses 18-21,

Genesis

17:18 And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

17:19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

17:20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

17:21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

It is also interesting that the covenant is 'and everlasting covenant'. But is the land part of the covenant? Previous verses indicate so. But perhaps the most explicit verse is in Psalms 105, verses 7-11,

Psalms

105:7 He is the LORD our God: his judgments are in all the earth.

105:8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.

105:9 Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;

105:10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant:

105:11 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance:

What is also interesting about this passage is that the covenant is with Isaac's son Jacob. Isaac had 2 sons. The other was Esau. Note that Esau was not included in the covenant. The term Israel I think is referring to all of Jacob's 12 children.

Another interesting passage is Deuteronomy chapter 11 verses 22-24 which was given to the Israelis before they went into the land after they left Egypt,

Deuteronomy

11:22 For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;

11:23 Then will the LORD drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves.

11:24 Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be.

The 'uttermost sea' is the Mediteranian. What is interesting also is that some of the land promised was greater than what the Israelis ever possessed. It sounds like parts of Jordan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia were included. I am a little confused by this because some other Bible passages seem to imply just the land west of the Jordan River.

Conditional Covenant With Israel

But why would the Israelis be cast out of the land if it was an everlasting covenant? Deuteronomy chapter 29 verses 24-28 is part of the warning given to the Israelis before they went into the land after they left Egypt. This is written as if it is looking back.

Deuteronomy

29:24 Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?

29:25 Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt:

29:26 For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them:

29:27 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book:

29:28 And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day

Note that 'they' and 'their' are referring to the Israelis. An interesting Bible passage records Christ's prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem. He said this about 30AD and Jerusalem was utterly destroyed about 70AD by the Romans. This comes from Luke chapter 21 verses 20-24,

Luke

- 21:20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.
- 21:21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.
- 21:22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.
- 21:23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.
- 21:24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Here, Christ predicted the sacking of Jerusalem. In the conflict of 70AD, the Jews were scattered. Note the word 'until' in the last verse. This indicates there will be a day in the future that they will have Jerusalem again. When, I do not know. Personally, if/when God wants this to happen, He will make it happen. It seems like the Israelis are trying to make it happen now. But if/when God want it done, it will happen and it will not be necessary for anyone to force the issue. I do not believe in forcing the issue. Who knows when this might happen? There is a clue in Deuteronomy chapter 30 verses 1-6,

Deuteronomy

- 30:1 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,
- 30:2 And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;
- 30:3 That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.
- 30:4 If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:
- 30:5 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.
- 30:6 And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

Notice that these verses say that when the Israelis return to God, He will gather them from all the nations and return them to the land.

There are many Jews today who think that because they are in part of the land today, they are fulfilling the prophecies. Many believe that because they are following some ritual, they are in good standing with God. But if one looks at all the prophecies, etc, one sees that this is incorrect. Too many parts are missing including things man cannot control like what the rainfall should be like. Many Christians believe this can only happen when the Jews accept Christ

as the Messiah promised and prophesied to them. Until that happens, they don't have clear title to the land and all the promised blessings cannot be fulfilled. The last verse shows that God wants their love.

The following prophecy concerns the return of the Jewish nation to Palestine. It appears that we are at verse 8 today.

Ezekiel

- 037:001 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,
- 037:002 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.
- 037:003 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.
- 037:004 Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.
- 037:005 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:
- 037:006 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.
- 037:007 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.
- 037:008 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.
- 037:009 Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.
- 037:010 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.
- 037:011 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.
- 037:012 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.
- 037:013 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,
- 037:014 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.

Prophecy of World Wide Anti-Semitism Still To Come

Looks like the stage is being set up for the end times, including the ancient prophecy of world wide anti-Semitism. The following is a biblical prophecy

Zechariah

- 014:001 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.
- 014:002 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.
- 014:003 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

The 'day of the Lord' is a phrase referring to the Great Tribulation Period which is still to come. It happens when Christ returns to the earth.

Notice the prophecy, which was written about 487BC, also references wounds Jesus suffered in crucifixion when He was here 2000 years ago.

Zechariah

012:010 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

Zechariah

013:006 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

Issues – Choosing Leaders

It may be helpful to see what kind of leader God has chosen.

God chooses leaders based on their heart. The following are instructions God gave to the prophet Samuel before David was chosen to be king.

1 Samuel

016:007 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

So if this is God's standard, should not we also follow that principle when voting for leaders? Sadly, we often do not have that choice in an election.

Often, the leaders God has chosen are reluctant. They often have weaknesses that people think will disqualify them from being leaders. Notice the passages Moses wrote about himself

Exodus

003:011 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

Exodus

004:001 And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

Exodus

004:010 And Moses said unto the LORD, O my LORD, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

God also chose Gideon to be a judge. Notice he is something of a coward in the way he threshed grain. He also describes himself as the least of his family

Judges

006:011 And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.

Judges

006:015 And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

Notice Samson, a judge of Israel, appears to be shy in meeting women

Judges

014:002 And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife.

Notice why God rejected king Saul

1 Samuel

015:023 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

1 Chronicles

010:013 So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;

010:014 And enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

Notice that David, who God chose as king, was only a shepard, the youngest of 7 sons.

1 Samuel

016:011 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

016:012 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

016:013 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So, Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

2 Samuel

023:001 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

023:002 The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

023:003 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

God choses those which have a good heart. And often they have flaws.

Deuteronomy

017:015 Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.

017:016 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.

017:017 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

Verses 15 and 16 may not be relevant today.

There may be additional considerations when choosing a leader. For example, if there is an election where neither candidate is a true Christian, for whom should one vote? The one who speaks the best? The one who lives the most moral life? The one who most closely represents your views?

Issues – Voting

Overview Principles

So what, if anything, does the bible teach about voting? Israel had judges and kings which ruled, not presidents or prime ministers.

Well, the bible does mention that the Israelis sometimes ‘chose’ their king. But even more than that, the bible lists principles by which God chose leaders. We too should follow God’s principle when choosing leaders. Some important points are:

1. The world belongs to God. People are merely tenants
2. Rules and judges are to serve God
3. Ideal government is when God rules
4. God allows other forms of government
5. Some falsely claim laws and voting should not consider religious beliefs
6. Key Point – Rulers Must Rule According To God’s Will
7. People choose leaders for bad reasons
8. Sin and condemnation for choosing ungodly leaders
9. God punishes nations who turn their back on Him
10. Even godly leaders sin, but they can still be good rules
11. Eulogies of good rules
12. Warning of politicians who lost their conscience (fellowship) with God
13. Guiding Principles When Voting

The following goes into more detail on each of these points.

The World Belongs to God. People Are Merely Tenants

This topic was covered earlier in the section entitled, “Overview – The Land Belongs To God”.

Rulers and Judges Are To Serve God

This topic was covered earlier in the section entitled, “Overview – Governments Are To Serve God”.

Ideal Government Is When God Rules

The ideal form of government is when God, or His representative, rules on earth.

God originally ruled Israel thru prophets, as told in the book of Judges. God instructed the prophet and the prophet led Israel. But a day came when the people of Israel no longer wanted that form of government, and wanted a king instead. Notice the following passage which states Israel rejected God’s rule.

1 Samuel

008:001 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.

008:002 Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: they were judges in Beersheba.

008:003 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

008:004 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

008:005 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

008:006 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD.

008:007 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

The following is a prophecy of God's kingship over Israel.

Hosea

013:009 O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.

013:010 I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes?

013:011 I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.

The bible again teaches that this is the best government in its prophecies of the coming Millennium. This is just one of several prophecies on the Millennium.

Revelation

020:001 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

020:002 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

020:003 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

020:004 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

020:005 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

020:006 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

God Allows Other Forms Of Government

God does allow other forms of government as discussed in the section entitled, "Issues – Monarchies – What Form Of Government?"

Some falsely claim laws and voting should not consider religious beliefs

The book of Judges in the bible tells the history of Israel when God ruled it thru judges. During this period, the nation repeated the pattern of turning their backs on God, God punishing them, then God sent a judge to free them when they repented. The last verse of Judges summarizes the great sin of that period.

Judges

021:025 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

The following is a more explicit warning.

1 Samuel

012:014 If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God:
 012:015 But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers.

The following is a warning how godly people may be regarded.

Hosea

009:007 The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come; Israel shall know it: the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred.

Key Point – Rulers Must Rule According To God’s Will

The following is a key passage.

2 Sam

023:001 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

023:002 The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

023:003 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

The last few verses are key. The form of government is not as important as the people in charge. Those people must rule in the fear of God (rule according to God’s will).

So this being true, then people must choose, must vote for rulers who will ‘rule in the fear of God’. And what is the fear of the Lord/God? There are several equally true meanings. One is that we should be aware that everything will be judged by Him, our Lord. Another is that we love Him So, much that we are afraid to hurt His feelings. Just like a husband will do anything for the woman he loves, So, should we do the same towards God. Rulers should seek God’s will and follow.

And how can that be done unless the ruler is a born again Christian?

People choose leaders for bad reasons

Before the nation of Israel had a king, it was ruled by God thru a series of judges. But a time came when the people of Israel demanded a king. The first one was Saul. He was eventually rejected by God. Then God instructed the prophet Samuel to anoint another of God’s choosing to be king. The following is the instruction God gave to Samuel.

1 Samuel

016:001 And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

016:002 And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the LORD.

016:003 And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.

016:004 And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably?

016:005 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

016:006 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD's anointed is before him.

016:007 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

Notice especially verse 7. Should we not be choosing leaders based on God's criteria? Should we not be choosing leaders who have a heart for God and wish to carry out God's will?

Many people will deny they select leaders on outward appearance. But how many times have you heard either

- We should have a women/African-American for president for a change
- That candidate is too obnoxious
- I only vote for candidates from that party
- He/she is more presidential

without knowing or caring what their policies are? It seems many, if not most, people vote for candidates without knowing what their policies and positions on issues are. Many people vote for candidates based on how the candidates present themselves and they accept whatever the candidates say without questioning it.

Sin and condemnation for choosing ungodly leaders

The nation of Israel split into 2 kingdoms after the reign of King Solomon. The northern kingdom quickly fell into idolatry and it never had a good king. Hosea is one of the prophets God sent to the northern kingdom. The following is part of a message God gave to the northern kingdom thru this prophet. Notice especially verse 4.

Hosea

008:001 Set the trumpet to thy mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the LORD, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law.

008:002 Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee.

008:003 Israel hath cast off the thing that is good: the enemy shall pursue him.

008:004 They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off.

008:005 Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off; mine anger is kindled against them: how long will it be ere they attain to innocency?

008:006 For from Israel was it also: the workman made it; therefore it is not God: but the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces.

The problem with these kings is that they never turned to God, they had no heart or desire for the one true God.

If God condemned their selection of these kings, would not God also be displeased with our selection of leaders who have not heart for Him?

God punishes nations who turn their back on Him

This was covered in the sections entitled, "Judgment Example".

But I will list the following passage as one more example of God punishing the northern kingdom for rejecting Him.

Hosea

008:001 Set the trumpet to thy mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the LORD, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law.

008:002 Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee.

008:003 Israel hath cast off the thing that is good: the enemy shall pursue him.

008:004 They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off.

008:005 Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off; mine anger is kindled against them: how long will it be ere they attain to innocency?

008:006 For from Israel was it also: the workman made it; therefore it is not God: but the calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces.

008:007 For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind: it hath no stalk; the bud shall yield no meal: if So, be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up.

008:008 Israel is swallowed up: now shall they be among the Gentiles as a vessel wherein is no pleasure.

008:009 For they are gone up to Assyria, a wild ass alone by himself: Ephraim hath hired lovers.

008:010 Yea, though they have hired among the nations, now will I gather them, and they shall sorrow a little for the burden of the king of princes.

008:011 Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin, altars shall be unto him to sin.

008:012 I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing.

008:013 They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it; but the LORD accepteth them not; now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: they shall return to Egypt.

008:014 For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof.

Even godly leaders sin, but they can still be good rules

Even good rulers sin, and sometimes commit awful sins. One example is King David. Some of his sins included:

1. Having the husband of Bathsheba killed.
2. Having a census completed against God's command
3. Breaking a treaty

Yet David was a good king as testified in the following passages.

1 Samuel

016:013 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So, Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

2 Samuel

008:015 And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people.

Acts

013:022 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave their testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

Hebrews

011:032 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

011:033 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.

011:034 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in flight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Eulogies of good rules

The bible records what various kings of Judah (the southern Israeli kingdom) did. It is worth noting how God judged/rated them.

1 Kings

015:011 And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father.

015:012 And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

015:013 And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron.

015:014 But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days.

1 Kings

022:042 Jehoshaphat was thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

022:043 And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless the high places were not taken away; for the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.

022:044 And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.

022:045 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

022:046 And the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.

022:047 There was then no king in Edom: a deputy was king.

022:048 Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Eziongeber.

022:049 Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not.

022:050 And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings

015:001 In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.

015:002 Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jecholiah of Jerusalem.

015:003 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done;

015:004 Save that the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.

015:005 And the LORD smote the king, So, that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. And Jotham the king's son was over the house, judging the people of the land.

015:006 And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

2 Kings

015:032 In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign.

015:033 Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok.

015:034 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD: he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done.

015:035 Howbeit the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burned incense still in the high places. He built the higher gate of the house of the LORD.

015:036 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

015:037 In those days the LORD began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah.

015:038 And Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings

018:001 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.

018:002 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah.

018:003 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did.

018:004 He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.

018:005 He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; So, that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.

018:006 For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses.

018:007 And the LORD was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.

2 Kings

022:001 Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath.

022:002 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

Notice in each of these cases, they were good kings because they “did that which was right in the sight of the Lord”. So, this should also be a major consideration when voting for a candidate. Do they have a heart for God to do His will?

Warning of politicians who lost their conscience (fellowship) with God

There are politicians who may be Christians, but have not desire to do God’s will. This can happen if, like the prodigal son, then fell into a sinful life style. Or this can happen because they never studied God’s word, the bible. Or this can happen because they lived in an ungodly community like Lot. (See the sections in this book regarding those topics.) The following verses warn of having your hearts becoming insensitive to God’s will. This can happen with politicians too.

Hebrews

003:008 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

003:009 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

003:010 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

003:011 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

003:012 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

003:013 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

1 Timothy

004:001 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

004:002 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

The bible also warns that the bible is a closed book to some. That is, a person can study and study the bible without ever really understanding it. That is what is meant in verse 7 below.

2 Timothy

003:006 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

003:007 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

003:008 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, So, do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

003:009 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as their's also was.

003:010 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,

003:011 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

003:012 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

003:013 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

003:014 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

003:015 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

003:016 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

003:017 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

So one must be careful in choosing leaders. Many politicians who claim they Christian support policies which are against what the bible teaches. It may be because their conscience is seared and can no longer recognize God's will. Or it can be because they are not really Christians at all and do not understand the bible because either they are unrepentant of sin in their lives or they are spiritually blind.

Guiding Principles When Voting

So, in summary, there are several questions one should consider when voting. They include

1. Is the candidate a born again Christian?
2. Does the candidate support issues that are according to God's will?
3. Is the candidate God fearing?
4. Will he/she do God's will?

Issues – Advice To Leaders

The following passage provides advice or a caution to government leaders including presidents, congressmen, senators, judges, governors, mayors and the like. In particular, they should keep the counsel of godly men (true Christians) and distance themselves from godless people.

Psalms

001:001 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

001:002 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

001:003 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

001:004 The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

001:005 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

001:006 For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

This passage is advice to all people. The advice is that you will be blessed for living a Godly life and for avoiding the ways of the godless. This has application to everyone, from children to seniors, from the low to the great. And it has application to all leaders in all rolls in government. Problems have and do occur when politicians take counsel of the ungodly.

Issues - Building Code

Not much is said in the Bible regarding building codes. But it is clear God is concerned about safety.

Deut

022:008 When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.

Issues – Punishment for Theft

God gave the nation of Israel an interesting punishment for theft.

Exodus

022:004 If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.

Exodus

022:007 If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house; if the thief be found, let him pay double.

Exodus

022:009 For all manner of trespass, whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing which another challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour.

The question is, what should the punishment be if the thief cannot pay back what he has stolen. Back in Moses' day, God prescribed the following.

Exodus

022:002 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.

022:003 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

This does not mean a person was to be sold as a slave. I believe this means indentured servitude. The basic idea is that the thief should have to work off his debt.

Issues – Prison Vs. Restitution

The 22nd chapter of Exodus were instructions God gave to the nation of Israel regarding social justice. *Remember, at that time, there were no prisons.* The punishment prescribed in the scriptures for a crime was to repay the victim several times more than what the criminal had taken or caused a loss. Sometimes the thief had to restore the loss, sometimes pay double, sometimes quadruple. This was both a punishment and a deterrent to crime. And it was a way to make the victim 'whole' again.

If a thief could not pay, then they would be sold into indentured servitude (see verse 3).

The emphasis was on restitution.

Exodus

- 022:001 If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.
- 022:002 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.
- 022:003 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.
- 022:004 If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.
- 022:005 If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, shall he make restitution.
- 022:006 If fire break out, and catch in thorns, So, that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field, be consumed therewith; he that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.
- 022:007 If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house; if the thief be found, let him pay double.
- 022:008 If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, to see whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods.
- 022:009 For all manner of trespass, whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing which another challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour.
- 022:010 If a man deliver unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast, to keep; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing it:
- 022:011 Then shall an oath of the LORD be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods; and the owner of it shall accept thereof, and he shall not make it good.
- 022:012 And if it be stolen from him, he shall make restitution unto the owner thereof.
- 022:013 If it be torn in pieces, then let him bring it for witness, and he shall not make good that which was torn.
- 022:014 And if a man borrow ought of his neighbour, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof being not with it, he shall surely make it good.
- 022:015 But if the owner thereof be with it, he shall not make it good: if it be an hired thing, it came for his hire.
- 022:016 And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife.
- 022:017 If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.
- 022:018 Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.
- 022:019 Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death.

- 022:020 He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.
- 022:021 Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.
- 022:022 Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.
- 022:023 If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry;
- 022:024 And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.
- 022:025 If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.
- 022:026 If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down:
- 022:027 For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious.
- 022:028 Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.
- 022:029 Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.
- 022:030 Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with his dam; on the eighth day thou shalt give it me.
- 022:031 And ye shall be holy men unto me: neither shall ye eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field; ye shall cast it to the dogs.

However, the punishment for personal injury was different. In such cases, the law breaker would suffer the same injury as they had inflicted.

Exodus

- 021:022 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, So, that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine.
- 021:023 And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,
- 021:024 Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,
- 021:025 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Leviticus

- 024:017 And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death.
- 024:018 And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast.
- 024:019 And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, So, shall it be done to him;
- 024:020 Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, So, shall it be done to him again.
- 024:021 And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death.

Deuteronomy

- 019:021 And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

The punishment for false witnesses was similar. Whatever the false witness accused another of, that punishment would be given to the accuser.

Deuteronomy

019:015 One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

019:016 If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong;

019:017 Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days;

019:018 And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother;

019:019 Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: So, shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

019:020 And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.

These teachings do not condemn modern day prisons. But they show a weakness in them because there is little emphasis regarding restitution.

Yes, by today's standards, these punishments may seem strange. But it must be remembered that there were no prisons. So, this way an alternative way to deal with crime. It required minimum outlay of money by government to deal with crime – certainly less per criminal than is spent in today's prisons.

Some have called prisons "modern day slavery". Well, Deuteronomy 22:3 prescribed selling criminals into indentured servitude which in some ways was like slavery.

Issues – Moral Budgets

There are various groups, some based in churches, that are advocating for ‘moral budgets’. The ideal is to increase spending on social programs to help the poor and reduce violence in communities. It includes raising money for these programs by reducing spending in some areas and raising taxes in various ways. There is disagreement in the details. But these proposals include the following.

- Decrease military spending
- Eliminating mass incarcerations (reduce the prison population)
- Raise taxes on the wealthy
- Increase corporate taxes

The money would be spent on social programs such as

- Reduce health care costs for the poor
- Improve mental health care for the poor, including mental health workings to answer mental health calls instead of the police
- Extra money for education to teach students how to get jobs and succeed, and not go to prison
- Improve utility service (water, etc) in poor communities where infrastructure may be poor
- Programs to end gun violence
- Affordable housing
- Rent relief
- Homeless services
- Broadband for the poor
- Livable wage, and help when one loses their job

Some of these issues have been touched on in the following sections and the reader is encouraged to read them.

- Issues – Welfare/Workfare/Bankruptcy
- Issues – Universal Basic Income
- Issues – Treatment of the Poor
- Issues – Healthcare a Right?
- Issues – Housing a Right?
- Issues – Work/Labor Laws

The following are some secular views, not supported by any particular bible passages.

There may be better ways to deter and prevent crime than prisons. However, in big city neighborhoods where criminals are not imprisoned, the same criminals continue to repeat their crimes. Many years ago when I reported being pick pocketed to the police, they were not interested in pursuing the matter explaining since it was a non-violent crime, judges would not be interested in imposing a prison sentence even if they found the pick pocketer.

Much of the crime problem comes from a lack of moral teaching when the person grew up. This is the fault of the nature of public school systems. This is why it is important to have a voucher system allowing parents to send their children to a parochial school.

Part of the problem is from poor young people believing they will be discriminated against and therefore will not be able to succeed. In short, they discriminate against themselves. So, long as one believes they will fail, they have little chance to succeed.

Another part of the problem is that young people (students) are not taught how to get a job and succeed at work. Schools simply teach reading/writing/arithmetic, but do not teach these other skills. Many graduate without even knowing how to look or apply for a job, let alone succeed at one. And often parents do not teach these things to their children because they do not know either, or technology has changed the way things are done.

Regarding mental health, some of these problems stem from a lack of a moral foundation. Some people who have such problems could have been helped if they had attended a parochial school.

Issues – Assassinations

The Bible teaches that people should be respectful of their leaders. For example, in Exodus chapter 22 verse 28, God states that people should not curse their rulers.

Exodus

022:028 Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

(Note – Some places in the bible the term ‘gods’ refer to judges because they act in the place of God.)

But is there ever a time when it is OK to assassinate a ruler? There is not much direct teaching on this in the Bible. But the story of King Saul and David (who later became king) has an interesting teaching. King Saul was very evil and God stated David would become king rather than any of King Saul’s sons. So, King Saul hated David and wanted to kill him. The following is a story of how David had a chance to kill the king but could not because it would be wrong.

1 Sam

024:002 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.

024:003 And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave.

024:004 And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

024:005 And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

024:006 And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD.

024:007 So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.

024:008 David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

024:009 And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

024:010 Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the LORD's anointed.

024:011 Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.

024:012 The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

024:013 As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

- 024:014 After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea.
- 024:015 The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.
- 024:016 And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.
- 024:017 And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.
- 024:018 And thou hast shewed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the LORD had delivered me into thine hand, thou killedst me not.
- 024:019 For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the LORD reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.
- 024:020 And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand.

The following tells of another time David had a chance to kill king Saul but did not because it would be wrong to do so. This Bible passage also states that it is up to God to eliminate leaders.

1 Sam

- 026:007 So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.
- 026:008 Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.
- 026:009 And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?
- 026:010 David said furthermore, As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.

But another interesting story is that of Ahab and Jehu. Ahab was possibly the most evil king Israel ever had. God stated that his family would end because of his evil ways. In the following record, Jehu had Ahab's son's killed.

- 010:001 And Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to them that brought up Ahab's children, saying,
- 010:002 Now as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons are with you, and there are with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour;
- 010:003 Look even out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house.
- 010:004 But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, two kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand?
- 010:005 And he that was over the house, and he that was over the city, the elders also, and the bringers up of the children, sent to Jehu, saying, We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou that which is good in thine eyes.

010:006 Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to morrow this time. Now the king's sons, being seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, which brought them up.

010:007 And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him them to Jezreel.

2 Kings

010:026 And they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal, and burned them.

010:027 And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day.

010:028 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

010:029 Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan.

010:030 And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.

010:031 But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.

I do not fully understand this. It was wrong to kill a king but it was OK to kill the evil sons of an evil king? I do not understand. Perhaps the point is assassinations are always wrong but that does not extend to family?

Notice what King David did to the man who claimed he killed King Saul and note why he did it.

2 Samuel

001:001 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag;

001:002 It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and So, it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

001:003 And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped.

001:004 And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.

001:005 And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead?

001:006 And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him.

001:007 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I.

001:008 And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite.

001:009 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.

001:010 So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

001:011 Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him:

001:012 And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.

001:013 And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite.

001:014 And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?

001:015 And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died.

And finally, the following verse seems to sum it up.

Proverbs

024:021 My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change:

024:022 For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?

The NIV translates the last part of verse 21 as 'rebellious officials'.

Issues - Monarchies – What Form Of Government?

In summary, governments should be lead by good God fearing people. The form of government is not So, important as having good, Godly people.

Originally, the nation of Israel was governed by judges which were chosen by God. During the time of the judge Samuel, the people demanded that they have a king and they chose a king based on who they liked. This effectively was a rebellion against God because they chose a different form of government and they chose their own leader. But God allowed it. Their king Saul ended up being an evil ruler and God removed him from power. The following are selected Bible passages that relate to that story. Notice especially the last 2 Bible passages.

The following passages show Saul was chosen because he was the people's choice to be king:

1 Sam

009:020 And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them; for they are found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house?

1 Sam

012:013 Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you.

Selecting a monarchy was a rejection of God

1 Sam

010:018 And said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you:

010:019 And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes, and by your thousands.

The problems described in Judges were not because of a lack of a king. It was because the people were not following God. During the time of the Judges, people did what they wanted and God periodically sent judgment on them. In Judges God raised up judges to save the people when they turned back to him. By selecting a king, they had a government to protect them during times of disobedience?

Notice what the Bible says

1 Sam

012:006 And Samuel said unto the people, It is the LORD that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt.

012:007 Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the LORD of all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to your fathers.

- 012:008 When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.
- 012:009 And when they forgot the LORD their God, he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab, and they fought against them.
- 012:010 And they cried unto the LORD, and said, We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served Baalim and Ashtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.
- 012:011 And the LORD sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.
- 012:012 And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the LORD your God was your king.
- 012:013 Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you.

Notice that not only was a monarchy the people's choice, but also King Saul was the people's choice – not God's. It is also recorded in 1 Samuel that King Saul was not a godly king.

Notice also that asking for a king was a sin for Israel

1 Sam

- 012:016 Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes.
- 012:017 Is it not wheat harvest to day? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.
- 012:018 So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

Notice that Israel repented of their request for a king

1 Sam

- 012:019 And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king.
- 012:020 And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

Notice that God said what is important is they obey Him.

1 Sam

- 012:014 If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God:
- 012:015 But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers.

Israel insisted they wanted a king. God gave them the king they wanted. His name was Saul. He did not follow God. God eventually deposed him. Then God chose David to be king. The following is what God told the prophet Samuel prior to anointing David as king.

1 Sam

016:007 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

2 Sam

023:001 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

023:002 The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

023:003 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

The last few verses are key. The form of government is not as important as the people in charge. Those people must rule in the fear of God (rule according to God's will).

Issues – Treatment of Foreigners

Exodus

022:021 Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Exodus

023:009 Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Deuteronomy

010:018 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

010:019 Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Issues – Socialism

What does the bible teach about socialism? Is it good or bad?

Actually, the bible has references to capitalism and socialism. But nothing saying that one is wrong and the other is right.

During the time Israel was a nation before Christ, they had a capitalistic type of economy. God did not condemn that time of economy. But God did give them nation rules regarding welfare, workfare and bankruptcy. See the section entitled “Issues – Welfare / Workfare / Bankruptcy” for more information.

But in the early days of the Church (after Christ), some Christians practiced a type of socialism. Once again, God did not condemn that type of economy. The following are some references.

Luke

003:011 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

Acts

002:044 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

002:045 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

002:046 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

002:047 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Acts

004:032 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

004:033 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

004:034 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

004:035 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

004:036 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

004:037 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

The story continues...

Acts

005:001 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

005:002 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

005:003 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

005:004 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

005:005 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

005:006 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

005:007 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

005:008 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for So, much? And she said, Yea, for So, much.

005:009 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

005:010 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

005:011 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

Notice that they died for lying to God, not because they withheld money.

But there one rule that applies to either system.

2 Thessalonians

003:010 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

The Bible reinforces this concept in the following passage

2 Thessalonians

003:011 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

003:012 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

The point is, if one will not work – not cannot work – then they should not eat.

Issues – Treatment of OFW

What is an OFW? It stands for Overseas Foreign Workers. It refers to workers, usually from the Philippines or Indonesia or Bangladesh, who obtain work visas to places like Middle Eastern countries or Hong Kong. Most work as domestic helpers cleaning homes and cooking food. Some work in the construction industry or factories. These are just examples of the work they may do.

Generally, these people have a contract to work for a specific employer for a specific period of time.

This is not an issue for the US because its laws are greatly different. For one thing, OFW in the US live independent lives from their work.

But in other countries, most of the OFW are probably domestic helpers. Working conditions vary greatly. Some have their own bedroom in their employer's house. Others are required to sleep on kitchen floors. Some are given a food allowance. Others can eat what their employers eat. Others are given expired food. Some are treated well. Some are physically harmed – beaten or raped. Some are allowed a day off each week. Some are allowed a partial day off. Others are given no time off. And some employers do not pay their OFW. How are the employers able to get away with it? Some employers insist on keeping the passports of their OFWs saying it is needed to protect the employer. This means the OFW is trapped. They have no money and they cannot return home even if they did because they have no passport. They cannot change jobs because they have no time to look and they have no paperwork.

Why would an OFW want to leave their job? They have to pay agencies large fees, often several months' pay, to be placed in a job overseas. The OFW often goes into debt with friends and relatives by borrowing money for the fee. So, why do some leave before their contract is up? It is because of mistreatment by the employer.

So how should OFW's be treated?

Ephesians

006:009 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Colossians

004:001 Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

Luke

006:031 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

See also the section entitled "Issues – Work/Labor Laws" and "Issues – Slavery" because that is what it is when an employer prevents a servant from leaving.

Issues - Human Sacrifice

I never originally thought I would have such a section. But there have been people who falsely claim that the bible endorses it. Because of that, and because some past nations had it, it seems worth while to address this issue.

Bible Passage in Question

The passages in question are from Judges chapter 11. It is good to read the entire chapter. But for brevity, I will highlight only certain passages.

Judges

011:004 And it came to pass in process of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel.

011:005 And it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob:

011:006 And they said unto Jephthah, Come, and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon.

Judges

011:030 And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands,

011:031 Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.

011:032 So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the LORD delivered them into his hands.

011:033 And he smote them from Aroer, even till thou come to Minnith, even twenty cities, and unto the plain of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

011:034 And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter.

011:035 And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the LORD, and I cannot go back.

011:036 And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the LORD, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the LORD hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon.

011:037 And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows.

011:038 And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months: and she went with her companions, and **bewailed her virginity** upon the mountains.

011:039 And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: **and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel,**

Some say that he killed and burned his daughter as a sacrifice. That probably is not true. She wanted to honor her father's vow So, she remained a virgin for her entire life.

Many good Christians disagree about the interpretation – whether she was killed in a sacrifice. Either way, human sacrifice is sinful. It is possible the passage means her father killed and burnt her. But it is important to remember there are other horrible stories in the bible which are there for historical reasons, even though the people did a terrible sin and God did not approve. This may be one of them. If so, I would be curious why the bible does not state what if any

punishment God did on Jephthah. If sh really was sacrificed, it shows how bad even good people can act. Sad either way.

Another Example – Abraham's Son

Genesis chapter 22 tells a story how God tested Abraham, asking him to sacrifice his son.

Genesis

- 022:001 And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.
- 022:002 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.
- 022:003 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.
- 022:004 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.
- 022:005 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.
- 022:006 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.
- 022:007 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?
- 022:008 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: So, they went both of them together.
- 022:009 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.
- 022:010 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.
- 022:011 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.
- 022:012 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.
- 022:013 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.
- 022:014 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.
- 022:015 And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,
- 022:016 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:
- 022:017 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;
- 022:018 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.
- 022:019 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

I am not sure why God tested Abraham this way. But the point is He did, and He stopped it after Abraham proved himself.

God's Condemnation Of Human Sacrifice.

The following bible passage is clear and needs no commentary.

Deuteronomy

012:031 Thou shalt not do So, unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

The term 'pass thru the fire' references a practice of heathen nations which murdered/burned children to heathen gods.

Deuteronomy

018:010 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch.

Notice in verse 37 who is behind the heathen religions.

Psalms

106:037 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,

106:038 And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.

Leviticus

018:021 And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

Leviticus

020:002 Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones.

020:003 And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name.

The following are examples where nations practiced human sacrifice and it was condemned by God.

2 Kings

016:002 Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD his God, like David his father.

016:003 But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel.

2 Kings

017:016 And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

017:017 And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

017:018 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.

2 Kings

021:006 And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

2 Chronicles

028:001 Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father: □

028:002 For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim.

028:003 Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

2 Chronicles

033:006 And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

Jeremiah

007:030 For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it.

007:031 And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.

Jeremiah

019:002 And go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee,

019:003 And say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle.

019:004 Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents;

Ezekiel

023:037 That they have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them.

023:038 Moreover this they have done unto me: they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths.

023:039 For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it; and, lo, thus have they done in the midst of mine house.

Summary

There are many passages in the bible which clearly condemn human sacrifice.

Issues – Treaty Between the Israelis and Palestinians

This is a complex issue. I do not know all that is behind the problem.

God told the Israelis not to make covenants (or treaties) with the peoples of Palestine.

Deuteronomy

007:001 When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

007:002 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

See also the section on treatment of foreigners.

Issues – Borrowing, Interest, Usury

The bible has a lot to say about borrowing, lending, and interest. Some of the verses seem to conflict. So, it is important to look at as many as possible and place them in context.

First, it is good to understand the types of people who borrow. The following list is from observation – not from a bible passage.

1. The Destitute – There are people who have nothing, who at best eke out a living even though they try very hard to succeed. The luckier ones in this group live pay check to pay check with nothing left for emergencies or unexpected expenses. These are people who have no realistic way to pay back loans.
2. The Average Borrower – Most people fall into this group. These are people who use credit cards and have the ability and willingness to pay back loans.
3. The Squanderers – There are people who spend money unwisely, and try borrowing money. Sometimes these are people who spend money on non-essentials and then fail to have money for things like mortgages, rents, taxes and the like. They live beyond their means. They seem surprised when these required payments come due. They try borrowing money and if they receive it, pay bills and then repeat the cycle without ever repaying the loans. There seems to be someone like this in most extended families.
4. The Investor – There are people, often business owners, who borrow money to invest it. Perhaps they need money to expand or start a business. Companies can also be placed in this category.
5. The Sinking Ship – There are people or business owners who find their investment is failing. For example, a store owner may find that his business is failing and wants to maintain it by borrowing money. Or a person loses their job and needs money to pay their mortgage.

So there are different reasons why people want to borrow money. I believe there are different bible passages which speak to each situation. The passages do not conflict. Rather they are principles to follow for different situations.

The following sections discuss various biblical principles followed by some lending issues faced by the US government today. There are no hard and fast rules listed below, just general principles and issues facing the US today.

General Life Principle

One principle outlines how we should conduct our lives. It is to do all things out of love. Keep this in mind when reading passages about lending, borrowing, and interest rates because it explains much.

1 Corinthians

016:014 Let all your things be done with charity.

Many newer translations use the word 'love' rather than the word 'charity'.

Matthew

007:012 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even So, to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Luke

006:031 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

Mark

012:030 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

012:031 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Lending to the Destitute

Exodus

022:025 If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.

022:026 If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down:

022:027 For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious.

Newer translations use terms like 'money lender' instead of 'usurer' and 'interest' instead of 'usury'. This verse is speaking to individuals, not businesses. The point is, when an individual lends money to the poor, do not take advantage of them. They should charge no interest, and do not take their bare necessities for life as a pledge. Be kind.

The following passage says something similar.

Psalms

015:005 He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

Here is another example where God states people should not charge interest to one's 'brother'. The passage also states not to charge interest to a poor 'stranger' or 'sojourner', i.e., foreigner. The point is, one should not charge interest to poor people. NOTE: The word victuals is food.

Leviticus

025:035 And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

025:036 Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.

025:037 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.

Deuteronomy

15:007 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

015:008 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

015:009 Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

015:010 Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

015:011 For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

The following passage describes traits of a just/good person, including not oppressing the poor and needy.

Ezekiel

- 018:010 If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that doeth the like to any one of these things,
 018:011 And that doeth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife,
 018:012 Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination,
 018:013 Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.
 018:014 Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like,
 018:015 That hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife,
 018:016 Neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment,
 018:017 That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live.

Luke

- 006:035 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.
 006:036 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

The following passage makes it clear that we should lend regardless if they are friends of ours.

Luke

- 006:032 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.
 006:033 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.
 006:034 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.
 006:035 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.
 006:036 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Condemnation of Rich Charging Interest on the Poor

In the following passage, the prophet Nehemiah condemns the rich for taking advantage of the poor, forcing them into bondage or indentured servitude. This happened when the Jews returned to Jerusalem from captivity and were rebuilding the walls of the city. These people had to borrow money for food since they had no income when building the wall. The wealthy charged interest and required surety at a time they should have been helping with the wall too.

Nehemiah

- 005:001 And there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews.

- 005:002 For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, are many: therefore we take up corn for them, that we may eat, and live.
- 005:003 Some also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth.
- 005:004 There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards.
- 005:005 Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already: neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards.
- 005:006 And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words.
- 005:007 Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them.
- 005:008 And I said unto them, We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer.
- 005:009 Also I said, It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?
- 005:010 I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray you, let us leave off this usury.
- 005:011 Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them.

1 Timothy

- 006:007 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.
- 006:008 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.
- 006:009 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.
- 006:010 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Possible Reward of Lending

Luke

- 006:032 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.
- 006:033 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.
- 006:034 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.
- 006:035 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.
- 006:036 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

A Form of Justice

The following passage seems to imply that the person who gets money thru interest and unjust gain will leave it to someone who will pity the poor.

Proverbs

028:008 He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

Usury A National Sin

In the following passage, God declares the reasons why He will punish Jerusalem. There are many listed in verses 3 thru 12. However, verses 3 thru 11 are bypassed here to get to the verse regarding interest contrary to God's principles

Ezekiel

022:001 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

022:002 Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city? yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations.

...

022:012 In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD.

Bible Teaches Interest May Be OK

Jesus told stories to teach His followers. Jesus told stories people could relate to; stories from everyday life. In the following story, He teaches that people should use the gifts or abilities which they are given. Notice towards the end, the master is angry with a servant for not getting a return on his money, stating that the servant could have lent the money to a money lender and gotten interest on it – something very easy to do. The point of the story is that we should use our abilities for God. But notice that in the story, obtaining interest is OK. So, there are times and circumstances when obtaining interest is OK.

Luke

019:010 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

019:011 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

019:012 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

019:013 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

019:014 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

019:015 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

019:016 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

019:017 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

019:018 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

019:019 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

019:020 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

- 019:021 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.
- 019:022 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:
- 019:023 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?
- 019:024 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. □
- 019:025 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)
- 019:026 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.
- 019:027 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

The story is also in Matthew. The entire story is not repeated below – only the ending.

Matthew

- 025:026 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:
- 025:027 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

The following passage is another where ‘usury’ (newer translations use the word ‘interest’) is allowed for ‘strangers’ (or foreigners) but not for one’s family.

Deuteronomy

- 023:019 Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury:
- 023:020 Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

Warning Against Borrowing Money

Proverbs

- 022:007 The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

Romans

- 013:008 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Warning About Co-signing Loans and Surety

Proverbs

- 006:001 My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger,
- 006:002 Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

Proverbs

011:015 He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it: and he that hateth suretiship is sure.

Proverbs

017:018 A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend.

Proverbs

022:026 Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts.

022:027 If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?

Repay Loans

Psalm

037:021 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.

Lend to Everyone?

Matthew

005:042 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

But this does not mean people should lend without care or thought. The bible teaches God will guide/instruct him to use discretion.

Psalm

112:005 A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

Isaiah

028:026 For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him.

And it may be necessary to pray about a matter before forging ahead.

James

001:005 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

001:006 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

001:007 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

001:008 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

The point is, there are reasons, there are people and circumstances when we maybe should not lend money. Does the person really need a loan? Is it a necessity? Does the person live beyond their means? Are they trying to save a sinking ship? Is the person honest? Do they have a history of trying to repay loans? There are many cases in small claims court of people with bad credit ratings who borrowed money from friends or relatives and did not pay it back. Are you OK with forgiving a loan if this happens?

Some people point to Matthew chapter 6 verse 12 as a reason to be generous in forgiving debts. Yes, people may need to forget debts of the poor. But Matthew 6:12 is not referring to debts, but rather transgressions as indicated in verse 15.

Matthew

006:009 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

006:010 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

006:011 Give us this day our daily bread.

006:012 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

006:013 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

006:014 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

006:015 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

God Blesses the Kind Lender

Proverbs

019:017 He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Ezekiel

018:005 But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right,

018:006 And hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman,

018:007 And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment;

018:008 He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man,

018:009 Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD

Nation Should Not Borrow

The following instruction was given to the nation of Israel. But it is good advice to us today.

Deuteronomy

028:012 The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

Special Debt Forgiveness Laws of Israel

God gave a special commandment to the nation of Israel that they must forgive loans ever seventh year. So, if a person borrowed money in the third year of the cycle, they had 4 years to pay it off before the remainder of the load would be forgiven.

Deuteronomy

- 015:001 At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release.
- 015:002 And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD's release.
- 015:003 Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again: but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release;
- 015:004 Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it:
- 015:005 Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.
- 015:006 For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.
- 015:007 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:
- 015:008 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.
- 015:009 Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.
- 015:010 Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.
- 015:011 For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.
- 015:012 And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.
- 015:013 And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty:
- 015:014 Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.

Things to Consider

1. Is it good/right to lend to a destitute person without interest?
2. Is it good/right to lend to a destitute person who squanders money?
3. Is it good/right to charge interest on a loan when it is for expanding or improving a business?
4. Is it good/right to charge interest on student loans? If so, how much? None? The rate of inflation? A higher amount?

This write up is not giving answers to these questions. It is just listing biblical principles on the topic.

Issue - Interest Rate Caps, Laws Helping the Poor

Poor people in the US in desperate need of cash sometimes go to what are called 'pay day' lenders. These are lenders which charge both a high rate of interest and a high application fee for loans. They are called 'pay day' lenders because the borrower is required to pay the loan back in a short period of time – ie, when they get their next pay check. Many of these borrowers end up in a cycle where they can only afford to pay back the interest because the rate and fee are so high. So, once they start borrowing money this way, they cannot stop.

Some have proposed lowering the interest rates they can charge. Others defend the lenders saying they are the only ones willing to lend to high-risk borrowers, many of whom will never repay.

Of course, banks and credit cards also charge interest on loans. There are laws limiting how much they can charge. Currently, those rates are relatively high compared with the inflation rate.

Issue – Student College Tuition Loans

One issue facing the nation as of this writing is the high level of debt some students have when they graduate college. Some of these students cannot even afford to pay the full interest on the loans when they graduate college. Students usually get these loans in the hope they will earn higher salaries with a college degree and will be able to pay them off.

Bankruptcy allows people to cancel debt when they have little hope of being able to repay it. However, current law does not allow them to cancel student loans in bankruptcy.

So the question is what to do?

Some have proposed that the government pay off the loans in full or in part. Some have proposed that government pay for the full cost of college. One concern is whether government can afford it. Another concern is whether it is fair.

Other ideas include limiting or eliminating interest on student loans.

The general principles God gives us in the bible are that loans should not be oppressive, especially to the poor. Ways to do this include limiting or eliminating interest on loans and forgiving loans.

We are also taught to use discretion. Lenders should use discretion. For example, should a student loan lender lend as much money to an English major as compared to an engineering major? Remember, engineering majors are expected to earn more than twice as much as the average English major. So, they should be able to pay back a larger loan. Also, students with higher grades can expect to earn more than those with lower grades. Should lenders base loans in part on a person's grade point average? This is a question only – not an implied statement.

Another way government could help the poor attend college is by passing laws eliminating the need for students to take unimportant classes to graduate. College courses can be placed into 3 categories:

1. Those directly related to one's major (for example, math)
2. Those which are indirectly useful to one's major (for example, if one was a math major, writing courses may be helpful to when writing reports)
3. Those which have nothing to do with one's major (for example, if one was a math major, foreign language courses have no benefit to a math major's career or job prospects)

Should government allow colleges and universities to force students to spend extra money on courses that have no value to their careers? Taking courses not related to one's major increases the cost of college and student loan debt. That hurts people, especially the poor.

So when one talks about helping the poor with student debt, this writer believes it is important to look at the entire picture, and not simply at the end result.

Issues – What is Religion?

This may seem like a silly question. Everyone knows religion is a belief and God and the practice of various religious rituals – right? Well, let's look at a dictionary definition and consider some religions.

Definition of Religion

One common definition is a belief in a god and methods or rituals of worship of that god. But another definition is the adherence to a set of practices and beliefs, not necessarily related to a god. For example, some might say, "humanism is my religion" where humanism has no god.

The following definition of religion from a 1957 dictionary...

- 1 belief in a divine or super-human power or powers to be obeyed and worshipped as the creator(s) and ruler(s) of the universe.
- 2 expression of this belief in conduct and ritual
- 3 a) any involving a code or ethics and a philosophy: as, the Christian religion, the Buddhist religion, etc. b) loosely, any system of beliefs, practices, ethical values, etc. resembling, suggestive of, or likened to such a system: as, humanism is his religion.
- 4 a state of mind or way of life expressing love for and trust in God, and one's will and effort to act according to the will of God, especially within a monastic order or community: as, he achieved religion
- 5 any object of conscientious regard and pursuit: as, cleanliness was a religion to him
- 6 the practice of religious observances or rites

So, you see, the term 'religion' does not have to include the belief in a god.

Which definition fits the common religions of today?

Islam teaches there is 1 true god, Allah. And it has various religious rituals or practices that must be observed. So, Islam fits the first definition of religion above.

Buddhism has religious rituals or practices. And some branches of Buddhism believe in a variety of gods and goddesses. However, some branches, such as the Theravada, do not believe in an omnipotent deity. So, some branches fit the first definition where-as others fit the second.

Confucianism emphasizes one should lead a good life, or, have a moral life style. There are rituals associated with it. My understanding is that it does not address any belief in a god. But many do believe in a god. So, it fits the second definition of religion.

What about Christianity? Well, Christianity has many branches or denominations. Central to all is a belief in one God who is a trinity. That is to say, the Trinity is three persons in one God. They have a special union or communion together. There is no perfect analogy for it. Saint Patrick likened the Trinity to a three leaf clover. Other theologians likened it to white light which is made up of blue, yellow and red light.

John

017:022 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

017:023 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

There are rituals. But many Christians state that Christianity is not a religion, but rather, a relationship with God that comes thru faith in Him, So, that they have a special bond/communion/union with Him, as stated in Jesus' prayer. And they say observance of rituals is good, but not necessary. But instead of rituals, they believe in leading a 'good' or 'moral' life style to keep them closer to God. The following passages expand on this

John

014:015 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

014:016 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

014:017 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

The above passage has another important teaching which is, if we love Him, we should keep His commandments. And what are they? To live a life for Him. It is about a life style.

John

010:025 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

010:026 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

010:027 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

010:028 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

010:029 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

010:030 I and my Father are one.

So Christianity is all about having a relationship with God. Yes, there are rituals. But they do not make us right with God. God will not decide who goes to heaven based on how one lives.

Ephesians

002:008 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

002:009 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

So that is why many Christians say Christianity is not a religion, but a relationship with God. However, it is important to Evangelical Christians to follow a good life style, one that is pleasing to God, not because it brings them to heaven, but because it brings them closer to God (just like pleasing one's spouse strengthens a marriage).

So how does God view religion?

James

001:027 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Or another way to phrase this is, pure and undefiled religion to God is when people care for the afflicted and keep themselves unpolluted by the sin in the world. I suggest reading the verse in a newer bible translation like the NIV.

So what then is a god?

This may seem like a strange question. But it is an important question because atheists argue that atheism is not a religion because they have no god. It was already pointed out that some commonly used definitions of 'religion' do not

require a belief in a god. Let's assume for a moment that the narrower definition of 'religion' is needed. Consider these things...

Some religions (like the ancient Greek and Roman religions and Hinduism) teach there are multiple gods. They have special powers that people do not have. But they are not all powerful. In other religions, a piece of wood or metal could be a god if fashioned properly. And even the sun has been considered a god because of what it imparts on the earth.

The bible teaches a broader meaning for the term 'god'. Take for example the following passages

Philippians

003:018 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

003:019 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

The following passage helps clarify what the bible means by the term 'belly'.

Ezekiel

014:001 Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me.

014:002 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

014:003 Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?

014:004 Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;

014:005 That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.

014:006 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.

014:007 For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself:

In the first passage, the term, 'their god is their belly' refers to their fondest desires as being their god. In the passage in Ezekiel, the phrase 'idols in his heart' refer to one's desires that keep one from God. So, from a biblical viewpoint, the term 'God' can refer to

1. The one true Triune God
2. Idols
3. Any desire that someone puts first and foremost in their life, which keeps them from turning to the one true God.

So then, what is a religion?

Is Confucianism not a religion because it has no god? Are some sects of Buddhism not religions because they reject the idea of a god? Is Evangelical Christianity not a religion because just because they say it is a relationship and not a religion?

The point is, a belief in a spiritual god is not key to all religions. However, from a biblical view point, everyone has some 'god', the thing(s) they love above all else. And all 'religions' seem to have teachings on life style, life choices, or rituals.

So are agnosticism and atheism religions? Some say it is a ridiculous question. It would be like saying not collecting coins is a hobby. But that is a bad analogy. A better comparison would be to religions which have no belief in a god. And from a biblical standpoint, they do have a god. But it is not just this writer's opinion. On March 4, 2019, the City Council in Portland Oregon passed an ordinance stating atheism and agnosticism are religions in order to protect atheists and agnostics from discrimination.

According to a Fox News article (and New York Post), in early 2020, a UK labor court ruled that 'ethical veganism' is a 'religion or belief' and was protected as such. This is because 'ethical veganism' is a belief system affecting their actions. But these people may or may not have a 'god'.

So from a broader viewpoint, yes agnosticism and atheism can be regarded as a religion because they have their own life styles and their own type of god.

So what are their life style choices? Probably a basic life style tenant of agnosticism and atheism is that you should be able to do anything your heart desires So, long as it does not hurt another. But this conflicts with Christianity. As mentioned earlier in this write up, the great sin during the Time of the Judges in Israel was they did what they thought best in their own eyes (their own morality).

Judges

021:025 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

So different people have different definitions of what is meant by 'religion'. What definition was meant in the First Amendment?

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

I believe a broad definition of religion was meant. For one thing, Christianity was the dominant religion when this amendment was passed. And Confucianism and Buddhism were known, or at least existed in the world, at that time. And from a biblical viewpoint, everyone has a god, something that is all important in one's life. And that affects their rituals of life style choices. And now even some civil administrations are defining belief systems as religions even though they do not have a god.

Issues - Religion in Government

Many people in the US are stating religion should not be in government. Government policies and laws should not be based on any religious belief.

But what is “religion”? That was addressed in a chapter entitled, “Issues – What is Religion”. But the short answer is in the following definition from a 1957 dictionary.

- 1 belief in a divine or super-human power or powers to be obeyed and worshipped as the creator(s) and ruler(s) of the universe.
- 2 expression of this belief in conduct and ritual
- 3 a) any involving a code or ethics and a philosophy: as, the Christian religion, the Buddhist religion, etc. b) loosely, any system of beliefs, practices, ethical values, etc. resembling, suggestive of, or likened to such a system: as, humanism is his religion.
- 4 a state of mind or way of life expressing love for and trust in God, and one's will and effort to act according to the will of God, especially within a monastic order or community: as, he achieved religion
- 5 any object of conscientious regard and pursuit: as, cleanliness was a religion to him
- 6 the practice of religious observances or rites

So, you see, the term 'religion' does not have to include the belief in a god.

It is impossible to remove religion from government because a religion does not need a god. A religion only needs a set of beliefs or philosophy of life. When people say religion should not be in government, what they really mean is they want their secular/humanistic religion influencing government and not the bible/Christianity. They simply want to replace one religion with another religion.

Issues – Public School Vs Freedom Of Religion?

Why revisit the subject of schools again? Partly because of its importance. And partly because of the material presented after the section on schools give a fuller back ground to the subject.

Most people do not see public schools as violating freedom of religion. After all, all public schools do is to keep God out of the classroom, right? And what is wrong with that?

Well, it is a bit more than keeping God out of the classroom. This is because schools teach values, and yes, morals. If those values and morals are inconsistent with Christianity, that is a problem – an infringement of freedom of religion.

Remember, Christianity is a relationship with God. To grow in that relationship, one needs to have a godly *life style*. No, people are not 'saved' and go to heaven because of how they live.

Ephesians

002:008 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

002:009 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

But having a sinful life style will weaken the closeness one has with God, just like cheating on a spouse weakens the marriage. The bible uses the terms 'grieving the Holy Spirit' and 'quenching the Holy Spirit'. So, what does that mean?

First, remember that God is a trinity – three persons yet one God. The three have a special union or communion. There is no perfect analogy. Saint Patrick likened it to a 3 leaf clover. Another theologian likened it to white light being made up of blue, yellow and red light. One of those persons is the Holy Spirit who works faith in people and 'seals' believers in the faith. He is also referred to as the comforter.

So then what happens if one continues in sin after coming to a saving faith in God? If one continues in sin, one can grieve the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians

004:027 Neither give place to the devil.

004:028 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

004:029 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

004:030 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

004:031 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

004:032 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

There can come a time that one can get so far into sin that they quench the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians

005:019 Quench not the Spirit.

005:020 Despise not prophesyings.

005:021 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

005:022 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

I believe this means one may lose the comfort and assurance of their salvation and place in Christ. They can lose that personal closeness with God. What do I mean? For many Christians when they come to a saving faith in Jesus, they feel the love of God flow in/thru them. God makes Himself so, real to them that it leaves them with no doubt of His existence and that the bible is real and true. It is like being on another plain of reality. I believe there are several million like that in this world. But it can be hard maintaining that closeness. But it can be done. But if one lets themselves indulge in sin, that will grieve the Holy Spirit. And if one dives too deep or long into sin, it can quench the Holy Spirit, and one can lose that intense love and reality of God's presence in them. They can lose the assurance and comfort of a loving God. That is the danger of maintaining a sinful life style. That is a reason why it is important to maintain a Christian life style. One does not lose their salvation when this happens because

John

006:035 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

006:036 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

006:037 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

006:038 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

006:039 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

006:040 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

So when one falls deeply into a sinful life, the person may

1. Lose the assurance of salvation
2. Lose a reward in heaven (there are rewards in heaven for how we live on earth, but only faith in Jesus is needed for salvation/heaven)
3. Lose what are called the 'fruits of the Spirit' as discussed in the following passage
4. Lose 'the place of fruit bearing', that is to say, they lose the ability to do work for God as long as they are in sin.
5. If one falls too deeply into sin, God may shorten their life.

Galatians

005:016 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

005:017 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: So, that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

005:018 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

005:019 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

005:020 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

005:021 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

005:022 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

005:023 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

005:024 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

005:025 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

005:026 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

So how does all this relate to public schools? Well, a child may have trouble coming to saving faith if their mind is polluted with the public school's worldly morality and values. And if the child is already a Christian, they may start

grieving the Holy Spirit. Another problem is that once someone gets into a routine of sin, or believing something bad is good, it can be hard to bring them back into the right ways

So as mentioned in the section, 'Issues – What Is Religion?', a godly life style is part of Christianity. Preventing one from living a Christian life style is a violation of their religion.

And what are the parts of a Christian life style? Are clean thoughts part of it? Should a Christian child be taught about gay lifestyles, and that they are socially acceptable? Well, since it is contrary to biblical teaching, no.

Philippians

004:008 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

So you see from the verse above, clean thoughts are part of a Christian life style. Teaching of sinful life styles violates it.

What of nudity? Is it proper for schools to require students to dress and shower with people of the opposite sex? The following 2 verses state it is shameful to appear naked in public.

Exodus

032:025 And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies:)

Isaiah

047:003 Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.

The following passage makes it clear that one must not force another to become naked.

Deuteronomy

018:006 None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the LORD.

018:007 The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she is thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

018:008 The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness.

018:009 The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.

018:010 The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover: for theirs is thine own nakedness.

018:011 The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, she is thy sister, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

018:012 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister: she is thy father's near kinswoman.

018:013 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister: for she is thy mother's near kinswoman.

018:014 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: she is thine aunt.

018:015 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter in law: she is thy son's wife; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

018:016 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it is thy brother's nakedness.

018:017 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; for they are her near kinswomen: it is wickedness.

018:018 Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time.

So schools are committing a great sin by forcing children to undress and shower with those of the opposite sex.

The following passage makes it clear one should not use devious ways to get someone to become naked

Habakkuk

02:015 Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!

So here again, schools are violating freedom of religion by forcing children to violate their Christian life style and engage in a sinful, shameful practice.

Remember what the bible teaches about raising a child.

Deuteronomy

006:004 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

006:005 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

006:006 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

006:007 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

006:008 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

006:009 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Because public schools are basically agnostic or atheistic, they violate the above Christian teaching on raising children. This is another violation of freedom of religion.

Another teaching is that people need to grow up in Christ. When people first believe, they may not know all of the teachings in the bible. And even if they do, they may not follow all of them. The following passage urges Christians to grow up in Christ.

Ephesians

004:014 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

004:015 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

And this becomes difficult in a godless school system. So, here is another way that public schools infringe on one's religious freedoms.

I will sum up with the following two passages.

Romans

006:001 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

006:002 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

006:003 Know ye not, that So, many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

006:004 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even So, we also should walk in newness of life.

006:005 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

006:006 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

006:007 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

006:008 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

006:009 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

006:010 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

006:011 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

006:012 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

006:013 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

006:014 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

006:015 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

006:016 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

006:017 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

006:018 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

006:019 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even So, now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

006:020 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

006:021 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

006:022 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

006:023 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans

008:005 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

008:006 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

008:007 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

008:008 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

008:009 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if So, be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

008:010 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

008:011 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

008:012 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

008:013 **For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.**

008:014 **For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.**

008:015 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

008:016 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

008:017 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if So, be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

One major point here is that born-again Christians are to live according to how the Spirit leads them. So, how can children do this when they are taught the carnal ways of society are good and acceptable in schools? How can a child avoid being carnally minded when they are taught alternative lifestyles are good and acceptable in schools, especially when they may be required to change clothes and take showers with people of the opposite sex? How can a child avoid being carnally minded when they are required to read material with offensive language or stories of immorality?

Galatians

006:007 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

006:008 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Legality of Christian Schooling

On June 30, 2020, the US Supreme Court ruled that if a school system has a 'charter school' program, that is, a program where children can attend private schools at taxpayer expense, then that program must allow payments for parents to send children to parochial (religious) schools (grade and high schools). A case came up before the court over whether this was allowed in Montana which has a clause in the state constitution forbidding this. The US Supreme Court in its ruling states that the US Constitution's First Amendment has precedence and allows it.

However, the Court also ruled that this only applies if the school system allows payments to charter schools. If there is no charter school program, then no payments can be made to parochial schools.

Issues – Harassment

As of this writing, there have been some news reports about a US Representative advocating that people should confront members of US administration if/when they appear in public, such as at restaurants. Should Christians be part of it? Well, remember what Peter wrote

2 Peter

002:010 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

Another passage which calls for people to be respectful is below.

Exodus

022:028 Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

There have also been reports of a left winged group who wear masks and disrupt gatherings, often violently, of people with differing opinions. And there are sometimes violent protests against police. But note the following.

Romans

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

I believe part of the reason why open ridicule of some politicians has become common is because one reaps what they sow.

Galatians

006:007 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

The point here is that if politicians speak in disrespectful terms, they can expect the same. This does not mean Christians should be disrespectful. Christians should always be respectful.

Issues – Immigration – A Secular View

Please see the section in this write up on discrimination.

Policies can be racist even if the people implementing them did not mean to be racist. And a policy is racist if it favors one race over another. Sadly, US immigration policies seem to favor Europeans and Central/South Americans over Asians and Africans. A European could become an 'undocumented' immigrant simply by using their passport to buy a plane ticket to the US. Someone from Central and South America would have a more difficult time because it requires not being caught crossing the US-Mexican border. However, Asians and Africans cannot swim the Pacific or Atlantic oceans to get to the US. And the US requires people in many Asian and African countries to have a US visa to buy a plane ticket to the US. The catch is, the US will not grant a visa unless you are wealthy (meaning it is obvious you will return) or you are marrying an American, or have an immediate family member in the US. People crossing the US-Mexican border can apply for asylum. But people in Asia and Africa cannot because you have to be in the US to apply.

Is this consistent with biblical teaching?

Issues – Immigration – Biblical Teachings

Introduction

This writer does not know of any bible passage that speaks directly about immigration. However, there are a variety of issues related to immigration which should be guided by biblical principles. So, this chapter will focus on these related issues. They include (but not limited to)

1. God owns the world and we are only tenants on the land
2. God 'gives' the land to different people, and establishes borders for the nations
3. God evicts nations which turn their backs to God
4. A nation's laws apply to all people equally, including immigrants
5. Nations should be kind to immigrants
6. God established workfare, not welfare, for poor families. This includes immigrants who may need it.
7. All people should obey the nation's laws, including ruler, citizens, and immigrants.
8. Loss of land, illegal immigration

We are tenants

This topic was gone into more depth in the chapter entitled "Overview - The Land Belongs to God - We Are Only Tenants". But it is relevant here So, a few key passages are included below. In short, the bible teaches that God owns the land and we are only foreigners or pilgrims while on earth.

Leviticus

025:023 The land shall not be sold for ever: **for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.**

1 Chronicles

029:015 **For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers:** our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

In the above passages, the word translated as 'sojourners' is the Hebrew word **וְתוֹשָׁבִים** (wə-tō·wō·šā·bîm) which means alien pilgrims. Today, we would use the word 'foreigners' instead of 'strangers'.

Jesus's parable of the wicked husbandmen also teaches that we are only tenants.

Matthew

021:033 **Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:**

021:034 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

021:035 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

021:036 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

021:037 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

021:038 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

021:039 And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

021:040 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

021:041 **They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.**

The phrase in verse 33 above, “let it out to husbandmen” are the Greek words ἐξέδετο (exedeto) and γεωργοῖς (geōrgois) which mean “leased” and “land worker” or “farmer”. So, it is accurate to say, the parable is talking about land that was leased to a tenant farmer. Once again, the thought is that we are tenants on God’s land. And tenants which reject God, can be cast off the land.

This parable is also part of the gospels of Mark and Luke. They are included below for completeness.

Mark

- 12:001 **And he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.**
- 012:002 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.
- 012:003 And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.
- 012:004 And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled.
- 012:005 And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.
- 012:006 Having yet therefore one son, his wellbeloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.
- 012:007 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be our's.
- 012:008 And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.
- 012:009 **What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.**

Luke

- 020:009 **Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.**
- 020:010 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty.
- 020:011 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty.
- 020:012 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out.
- 020:013 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him.
- 020:014 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.
- 020:015 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?
- 020:016 **He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.**

Not Their Land

Genesis

015:013 **And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;**

Genesis

017:008 **And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.**

Genesis

028:001 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

028:002 Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

028:003 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

028:004 **And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.**

Genesis

037:001 **And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.**

God Establishes The Nations Borders and Governments

Some people believe there should be no national borders and people should be free to migrate freely, without government restrictions. But that not consistent with biblical teaching. There are several basic biblical principles which include

1. God establishes borders for nations.
2. God gives nations the governments they deserve
3. People are to obey the nation's government

God Establishes Borders

This may come as a surprise to people, but God establishes borders for nations. There are several passages on this. The following is a sampling.

Acts

017:026 **And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;**

In the following passage, some translators used the phrase "sons of God" instead of "children of Israel", although the word "Israel" seems to be the better translation. But the point is similar in that God set the boundaries of nations.

Deuteronomy

032:008 **When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.**

Nehemiah

- 009:022 **Moreover thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst divide them into corners: So, they possessed the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan.**
- 009:023 Their children also multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them into the land, concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess it.
- 009:024 **So the children went in and possessed the land, and thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would.**
- 009:025 And they took strong cities, and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and oliveyards, and fruit trees in abundance: So, they did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness.
- 009:026 Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations.
- 009:027 Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.
- 009:028 But after they had rest, they did evil again before thee: therefore leftest thou them in the land of their enemies, So, that they had the dominion over them: yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and many times didst thou deliver them according to thy mercies;
- 009:029 And testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (which if a man do, he shall live in them;) and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear.
- 009:030 Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands.
- 009:031 Nevertheless for thy great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God.
- 009:032 Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day.
- 009:033 Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly:
- 009:034 Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them.
- 009:035 For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works.
- 009:036 Behold, we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it:
- 009:037 And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress.

Zephaniah

- 002:008 I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people, and **magnified themselves against their border.**
- 002:009 Therefore as I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.

The following passage shows that Moses respected borders and took them seriously.

Numbers

020:016 And when we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border:

020:017 **Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's high way, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders.**

020:018 And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.

020:019 And the children of Israel said unto him, We will go by the high way: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it: I will only, without doing anything else, go through on my feet.

020:020 And he said, Thou shalt not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand.

020:021 **Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.**

God Gives Nations The Governments They Deserve

This has been covered in another section in this book. But the following verse is repeated for convenience.

Daniel

004:017 This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that **the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.**

We Are To Obey Governments

Once again, this has been covered in another section in this book in more detail. But the following verse is repeated for convenience.

Romans

013:001 **Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.**

013:002 **Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.**

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

013:005 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

013:006 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

013:007 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

Summary

God sets the borders of countries. God sets the rulers of a country. We are to obey the laws of the government. This includes people who want to immigrate from other countries because these are God ordained borders.

Equal Justice, Equal Laws

There are many passages in the bible which say that foreigners should have equal justice to citizens. And there should be one law for all. Many of those passages are included below.

In the following passage, the word translated as 'stranger' is the Hebrew word גֵר (gêr) and it means foreigner.

Exodus

012:048 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

012:049 **One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.**

012:050 Thus did all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, So, did they.

Exodus

022:021 Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Exodus

023:009 Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Leviticus

016:029 And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, **and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:**

016:030 For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

016:031 It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.

Leviticus

018:026 **Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you:**

018:027 (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;)

Leviticus

024:022 **Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I am the LORD your God.**

Leviticus

25:004 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.

025:005 That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.

025:006 **And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee.**

Numbers

015:015 **One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you,**
an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, So, shall the stranger be before the LORD.

015:016 One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.

Numbers

015:029 **Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.**

015:030 But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

Deuteronomy

001:016 **And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him.**

Deuteronomy

010:017 **For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:**

010:018 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

010:019 Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Deuteronomy

024:017 **Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge:**

024:018 But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

Deuteronomy

027:019 **Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.**

Special Laws

There is another chapter in this book which points out that God ordained workfare, no welfare, for nations. Nations should provide a way for the poor to work. For the nation of Israel, the farmers were not allowed to glean grain from the fields. Instead, farmers were to allow the poor to pick up any grain that fell to the ground during harvest. (This is gleaning.) In the following passages, God tells the farmers that poor foreigners were to be treated like poor citizens in that they should be allowed to glean the fields as well. But no where in the bible does it say the government had to provide them with food or shelter. Similarly, it does not forbid governments from doing that either.

There was an exception which will be mentioned later in regards to Deuteronomy 14:28-29.

Leviticus

019:009 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

019:010 **And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.**

In the following passage, God instructed the Israelis to make a special provision for the poor, including the poor foreigners living in the land, every third year. There is a disagreement as to whether

1. The Levites were to share their tithe every third year with the poor or
2. The Israelis were to give an additional tithe every third year for the poor

Either way, the poor were to receive the tithe every third year, not every year, but every third year.

Deuteronomy

014:028 At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates:

014:029 **And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.**

Deuteronomy

024:019 When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands.

024:020 When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

024:021 **When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.**

Deuteronomy

024:020 When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

024:021 When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

Be Kind

Citizens should be kind to foreigners.

Leviticus

019:033 **And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him.**

019:034 **But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.**

Leviticus

23:022 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, **neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.**

Deuteronomy

024:014 **Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates:**

Deuteronomy

026:012 **When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled;**

026:013 **Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them.**

Punishment of Israel

There are many warnings in the bible how God would let foreigners cast Israel out of the land if they turn their backs on God.

Deuteronomy

028:043 The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.

028:044 He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.

028:045 Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:

Deuteronomy

029:022 So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the LORD hath laid upon it;

029:023 And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:

029:024 **Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?**

029:025 **Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt:**

029:026 **For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them:**

029:027 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book:

029:028 **And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day.**

029:029 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law

This should be a warning to us today that if we turn our backs on Him, God will allow foreigners to possess our nation. There is a reason why the US has the leaders it has. There is a reason why God has allowed illegal immigration, poor weather and the like in the US.

Land Promised to Israel

Genesis

- 015:001 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, **Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.**
- 015:002 And Abram said, LORD God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?
- 015:003 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.
- 015:004 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.
- 015:005 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So, shall thy seed be.
- 015:006 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.
- 015:007 **And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.**
- 015:008 And he said, LORD God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?
- 015:009 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.
- 015:010 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.
- 015:011 And when the fowls came down upon the carcases, Abram drove them away.
- 015:012 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.
- 015:013 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;
- 015:014 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.
- 015:015 **And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.**
- 015:016 **But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.**
- 015:017 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.
- 015:018 **In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:**
- 015:019 **The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,**
- 015:020 **And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,**
- 015:021 **And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites**

Deuteronomy

- 001:006 The LORD our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount:
- 001:007 **Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates.**
- 001:008 **Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them.**

Deuteronomy

011:022 For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;

011:023 Then will the LORD drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves.

011:024 **Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be.**

011:025 There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the LORD your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you.

White Replacement Theory

In May, 2022, an 18 year old man attacked a grocery store in Buffalo, NY, shot and killed 10 African Americans. It was reported he was angry that 'minorities' were becoming the majority and Whites were gradually becoming a minority. It was termed "white replacement theory". This writer has no interest in studying this theory. But some uncomfortable truths need to be pointed out to anyone who believes it.

To those who believe in "white replacement theory", they should know that the bible teaches God owns the world and everything in it. The bible teaches we are only tenants. And the bible teaches that when a nation rejects God, turns it back on God, God will kick the tenants out and replace them (Deut 28 and Lev 26). It is understandable that people are not happy with illegal immigration. Government should enforce its laws. But the bible also teaches that God gives a nation the government it deserves (Dan 4:17). The US has moved farther and father to the left, away from God. It is sad to see what is happening but it is not surprising.

And to those who believe in "white replacement theory", the bible teaches against racism. One such passage the story of the Good Samaritan. Another is 1 John 3:10, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: *whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.*"

There is more on these topics in other chapters in this book.

Issues - Immigration – Separation of Spouses

The following bible passages contain some teaching about divorce. They do not speak to immigration. But they make an important point – ‘what God has joined together, let no man put asunder’.

Mark

010:005 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

010:006 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

010:007 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

010:008 And they twain shall be one flesh: So, then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

010:009 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Matthew

019:003 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

019:004 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

019:005 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

019:006 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Shouldn't this principle also apply to immigration? Occasionally there have been cases where a spouse of a US citizen was deported because they entered the US illegally and do not have a legal right (ie, a green card or US citizenship) entitling them to stay. There is a process whereby they can leave and then apply for a spousal visa. Once the application is submitted for a spousal visa, it takes about a year to receive one, assuming it is approved. It just seems that if a couple has been married for a period of time in a proper marriage (ie, truly living together, etc), that there should be a streamline process to keep them together.

Issues - Pledge of Allegiance

Some schools and government bodies require people to recite the pledge of allegiance. Is this appropriate? Notice the following passage and its teaching. After the Israelis left Egypt, and before they entered the promised land of Palestine, the prophet Joshua spoke to them and said:

Joshua

- 024:001 And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.
- 024:002 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.
- 024:003 And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.
- 024:004 And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto Esau mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.
- 024:005 I sent Moses also and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them: and afterward I brought you out.
- 024:006 And I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red sea.
- 024:007 And when they cried unto the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.
- 024:008 And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you.
- 024:009 Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you:
- 024:010 But I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: So, I delivered you out of his hand.
- 024:011 And you went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand.
- 024:012 And I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow.
- 024:013 And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat.
- 024:014 Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.
- 024:015 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Did he swear allegiance to the nation of Israel? No. He promised to serve God.

So is this relevant to the US today? Think about it. Governments pass laws that are contrary to God's teaching. Courts make rulings that are contrary to God's law. Yes, the bible teaches we should obey governments and respect those in authority. But it also says:

Acts

005:029 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

Matthew

006:024 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Yes we should obey government So, long as it does not force us to sin. So, is there harm in saying the Pledge of Allegiance? Well, first of all, God commands us not to break oaths.

Numbers

030:001 And Moses spake unto the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded.

030:002 If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth

So if you pledge your allegiance to your country, and the country requires you to do something contrary to God's will, which sin will you commit? Breaking your oath or breaking God's other laws?

Jesus taught that we should not swear at all.

Matthew

005:033 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

005:034 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

005:035 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

005:036 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

005:037 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Issues – Prisons and Prison Reform

There has been some discussion of prison reform and even eliminating prisons. This raises the question as to what forms of punishments God allows and how prisoners should be treated.

What Punishments Did God Authorize

The following passage is rather lengthy even though only the last few verse speak to the topic. But it is presented completely to show its origin. Please note that verses 12-26 are the letter. Unlike the other verses, they were written in Aramaic. Color of the lettering was changed to make it clearer.

Ezra

- 007:011 Now this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel.
- 007:012 Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time.
- 007:013 I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.
- 007:014 Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand;
- 007:015 And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem,
- 007:016 And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem:
- 007:017 That thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat offerings and their drink offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem.
- 007:018 And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God.
- 007:019 The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem.
- 007:020 And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow it out of the king's treasure house.
- 007:021 And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily,
- 007:022 Unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much.
- 007:023 Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?
- 007:024 Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them.
- 007:025 And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.
- 007:026 And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.

007:027 Blessed be the LORD God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem:

007:028 And hath extended mercy unto me before the king, and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened as the hand of the LORD my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me.

Verses 12-26 are the king's command. By itself, it appears this could just be a human decision or opinion. But notice verse 27 which says, "put such a thing at this in the king's heart" implying this was God's choice. So, this implies God's approval of

- Speedy justice
- Death sentences
- Banishment
- Confiscation
- Imprisonment

When reading the following passage, remember these are laws given by God to the nation of Israel. These were their laws. But it is also a message for us on what punishments has authorized.

Leviticus

024:010 And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp;

024:011 And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the Lord, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:)

024:012 And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be shewed them.

024:013 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

024:014 Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him.

024:015 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin.

024:016 And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death.

024:017 And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death.

024:018 And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast.

024:019 And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, So, shall it be done to him;

024:020 Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, So, shall it be done to him again.

024:021 And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death.

024:022 Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I am the LORD your God.

024:023 And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.

Notice the above passage shows the following

- Death penalty for murder
- Restore property when property was killed/destroyed
- Eye for an eye for physical harm
- Equality under the law, no favorites

The following passage does not speak of punishments that God authorized. Instead, it is a reminder that governments can and do 'execute wrath upon him that doeth evil' by the authority of God. Governments need not be teachers or social workers or parents, but authorities who may execute wrath and revenge on criminals as mentioned in verse 4.

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

013:005 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

013:006 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

013:007 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

Treatment of Christian Prisoners

Matthew

025:034 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

025:035 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

025:036 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

025:037 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

025:038 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

025:039 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

025:040 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

025:041 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

025:042 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

025:043 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

025:044 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

025:045 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

There are 2 interesting points here regarding prisons.

- First, we as individuals should be kind to (visit) prisoners
- Jesus did not condemn the use of prisons

Ecclesiastes

008:011 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

Issues – Songs and Music

This may not be an issue in the US. But it is in some parts of the world. The question is, is music wrong? Is it sinful as declared by the Taliban who are in Afghanistan? I believe the vast majority of people worldwide would say, “No, music itself is not sinful”. But this question should be answered by scripture. Notice the following passages.

In Psalm 33, notice especially what verses 1-3 say. The remaining verses give reasons.

Psalm

033:001 Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

033:002 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

033:003 Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

033:004 For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.

033:005 He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

033:006 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

033:007 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

033:008 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

033:009 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

033:010 The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.

033:011 The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

033:012 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

033:013 The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.

033:014 From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

033:015 He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.

033:016 There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

033:017 An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.

033:018 Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

033:019 To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

033:020 Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.

033:021 For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

033:022 Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

So, in Psalm 33, we are instructed to sing and play songs of praise to God.

Psalm

092:001 IT IS A GOOD THING TO GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD, AND TO SING PRAISES UNTO THY NAME, O MOST HIGH:

092:002 To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,

092:003 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.

There are many such passages in the bible. So, God Himself says we should sing praises His praises. So, music itself is not evil should not be banned. Of course, these passages do not relate to other types of music with may or may not be good.

The following passage is part of a vision John had of heaven.

Revelation

015:001 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

015:002 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

015:003 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

This section closes with a passage from Mark.

Mark

014:022 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

014:023 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

014:024 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

014:025 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

014:026 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

So, if Jesus and His disciple sang a hymn, then certainly some types of music are good.

Issues – Pets as Family

This may seem like a strange topic for this write up. But it is an issue for many people.

There is nothing wrong caring about animals or one's pets. And some people are so attached that they consider them as family. They will feed their pets the same food as they eat. They will buy them gifts on the holidays. They treat them as if they were their children.

And sometimes, they take this love a little too far. One example is when people walk their dogs. This itself is a fine activity. But a problem arises when they allow their dog(s) to defecate on another person's lawn. The dog owner does not want to pull their animal away when they feel the need to go. They see this as cruel – and I suppose it is to a degree.

The biggest problem is that the urine from some dogs kill the grass. This causes the home owner time and money to repair their lawn – often every week throughout the summer. A lesser problem is when the dog defecates because it does not kill the grass.

So what are the guiding biblical principles on this.?

Love Your Neighbors

Leviticus 19:18

019:018 Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

The problem with many dog owners is that they love their pets more than they care about other human beings. It is so simple for a dog owner to have their pet relieve itself on the dog owner's property before taking the dog for a walk. But the pet owner does not want to do this. Is this loving one's neighbor as much as oneself? I don't think so.

This is the first of several passages on loving one's neighbor. When the bible says something once, it should be sufficient. When the bible repeats itself, people must take special note of the teaching.

Matthew 19:19

019:018 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

019:019 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Matthew 22:39

022:037 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

022:038 This is the first and great commandment.

022:039 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

022:040 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Mark 12:31

012:029 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

012:030 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

012:031 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Romans 13:9

013:009 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Galatians 5:14

005:013 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

005:014 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

James 2:8

002:008 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

So, who is one's neighbor? Jesus answers that question in the following parable. When reading it, note that Samaritan was looked down on by Jewish people. Yet he was the good neighbor.

Luke 10:27

010:026 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

010:027 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

010:028 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

010:029 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

010:030 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

010:031 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

010:032 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

010:033 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

010:034 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

010:035 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

010:036 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

010:037 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Also note that the good neighbor was not a dog. Pets can be great and they can be loving. But we need to place greater care for humans than for animals. Remember, the good neighbor was not a dog.

Love for Enemies

Now in the following passages, Jesus takes this teaching one step farther by saying we should love our enemies and treat them as we would like to be treated.

Matthew 5:43

005:043 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

005:044 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

005:045 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

005:046 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

005:047 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

005:048 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Luke 6:27

006:027 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

006:028 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

006:029 And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.

006:030 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

006:031 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

006:032 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

006:033 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

006:034 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

006:035 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

So, we should have high regard even for our enemies, and that should be higher than we have for animals. No were in the bible does it say we should love a dog as we love our neighbors – or even our enemies.

Issues – Congressional Investigations

Time and time again we have seen Congress try to punish someone with one-person testimony about something that happened decades ago. Technically, Congress says it is doing an investigation. But the investigation is often public. In short, the person is being tried in the press. And even if no charges are filed against the accused, some members of Congress and the press maintain that they believe the accuser – thus tarnishing the reputation of the accused. Notice the following passages.

Deuteronomy

017:006 At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

Deuteronomy

019:015 One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

Numbers

035:030 Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die.

This principle is also taught in the New Testament.

John

008:017 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

2 Corinthians

013:001 This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

1 Timothy

005:019 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

Hebrews

010:028 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

Notice that Jesus taught this principle of 2 or 3 witnesses when teaching about excommunication.

Matthew

018:015 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

018:016 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

018:017 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as $\square$ an heathen man and a publican.

The point is, unless there are multiple witnesses (or evidence) to a thing, it is wrong to bring someone to trial, as Paul stated in 1 Timothy 5:19, "**Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.**" Public Congressional investigations are in effect, public trials. A person may not go to prison. But can harm an innocent person's reputation.

Leviticus

019:016 Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour; I am the LORD.

Jesus said,

Matthew

005:009 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

005:010 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

005:011 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

005:012 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so, persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

God's remedy for lying witnesses back then was as follows.

Deuteronomy

019:016 If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong;

019:017 Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days;

019:018 And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother;

019:019 Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: So, shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

019:020 And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.

019:021 And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

Deuteronomy 19:15 says, "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established." So, where are the other 'witnesses'?

Time and time again we have seen Congress try to crucify someone with one person testimony about something that happened decades ago. This has to stop.

Also, this allegation is for something someone allegedly did when they 30+ years ago when they were still in school???

Issues – Corona 19 Virus – Lockdowns and Quarantines

In 2020, there was a controversy about whether the government could/should place restrictions on the size of church services and whether the government could force congregants to wear masks to reduce the spread. This write up is not a definitive answer. But it raises some things to be considered.

Legality in the US

The First Amendment states,

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

There are no restrictions on freedom of religion or its practice. So, laws restricting gatherings and how they are conducted are not legal. Of course, courts would apply a reasonable test on some practices. For example, human sacrifice would not be upheld by courts. But is the restriction of the size of services or wearing masks something the courts could enforce?

Biblical Teaching

Obey Government

There are several bible passages which tell us to obey government. The following is one example.

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

There is more on this in the section entitled “Citizenship Responsibilities – Obey Government”. The point is, God tells us governments are ‘ordained by God’ and we should be obedient to them, So, long as what they require does not violate God’s will.

Don’t Fail to Assemble

Hebrews

010:023 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

010:024 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

010:025 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and So, much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Large services can be wonderful things. But in many parts of the world, Christians cannot assemble in large numbers or in churches. Instead, in some countries there are hundreds or thousands of homes where people assemble in small numbers to learn God’s word and to worship. Such ‘churches’ are also good for encouraging each other.

Regarding corona virus restrictions, is it a heavy burden to ask congregants to wear a mask during a service? Is it a heavy burden to limit the size that gathers and instead have multiple smaller services?

Don't Distress Others

Sadly, many have mocked churches and congregations that ignored government guidelines during the pandemic. They held services with packed churches and the congregants failed to wear masks. This may have been their right. But they and Christianity were mocked by many for these actions. If we are to lead people to Christ, did those actions help or hurt the Church overall? Notice what Paul wrote about eating meat.

Romans

014:014 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

014:015 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

014:016 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

014:017 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

014:018 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

014:019 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Of course, this is not talking about churches during the pandemic. But the principle is the same. Would it be better to follow government guidelines for the sake of avoiding conflict and image?

Issues – Vaccine Mandates

There are times when a government requires all people to receive a vaccine. One example is how schools require students to get a variety of shots before they can attend, including polio, measles, and the like. Another example is how some governments have mandated that people be vaccinated against covid-19.

There are some who believe taking medicines and getting vaccinated is contrary to biblical teaching. Among them, some believe that we must have faith that God will keep us well and heal us when we do become ill. Others say they will only take medicine or a vaccination when they feel/hear 'a still, small voice' (another way of saying God pulling on their hearts) to take the medicine of vaccine – or feel God's motivation to not take it.

So, what are the guiding principles on this topic?

Obey Government

This topic has been covered before in another chapter. In short, people are to obey governments except when it conflicts with God's will.

Is Medicine Against Biblical Teaching?

There are only a few bible passages speaking of medicines. The following are 2 of the principal passages on the topic. In the first, the Apostle Paul urged Timothy to take some wine, as a medicine, for a stomach ailment. (Yes, wine can sooth a stomach.) In the second passage, Jesus tells a parable in which a person uses wine and oil as a medicine for a wound.

The point here being, the bible talks about medicines, advocating them, and not condemning them.

1 Timothy

005:023 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

Luke

010:033 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

010:034 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

Is Seeing A Doctor Against Biblical Teaching?

This topic is similar to that of medicine. In the following passages, reference is made to physicians, and they do not condemn the physicians. The point being, it is OK to see a doctor since they are not condemned in the bible in any way.

Matthew

009:012 But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

Luke

004:014 Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

Divine Healing

I remember a Christian minister who preached faith healing say, thru faith, one can avoid ever getting sick. He also stated that God never causes someone to become ill. Instead, He allows the devil to inflict illness. And he pointed to the following passage from Job.

Job

001:009 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

001:010 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

001:011 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

001:012 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So, Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

I am not saying if what he said is true. But he added that it took a special level of faith to be healed. And if we do not have that level of faith, we should go to a doctor – period. Whether we go to a doctor or seek divine healing it is all for the same objective. Once again, I am not saying that he was correct. Only pointing out that one of the main proponents of divine healing also urged people to go to the doctor when ill.

Great Freedom In Living For God

There is great freedom in living for God. We do not have to follow any special ceremonial rules. For example, there were controversies during the Apostles' times, on what people could eat. The apostles taught that all was good if done for the glory of God. Eating certain meats or abstaining from them did not commend us to God – because we are justified by faith. Sin is doing something against God's will. One key verse is Romans 14:23, "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin". Another key verse is 1 Corinthians 10:31, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

The point is, just like we are free to eat meats (including pork), So, also we are free to take medicines. Taking medicine, like eating meat, does not commend us to God and does not condemn us in the eyes of God.

Some relevant bible verses are as follows.

1 Corinthians

006:012 **All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient:** all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

Galatians

005:013 **For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty;** only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

005:014 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Romans

006:022 **But now being made free from sin,** and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

1 Timothy

004:001 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

004:002 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

004:003 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

004:004 **For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:**

1 Corinthians

008:004 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

008:005 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

008:006 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

008:007 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

008:008 **But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.**

008:009 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of your's become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

008:010 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

008:011 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

008:012 But when ye sin So, against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

008:013 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

1 Corinthians

010:023 **All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.**

010:024 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

010:025 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake:

010:026 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

010:027 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

010:028 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

010:029 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

010:030 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

010:031 **Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.**

010:032 **Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:**

010:033 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

Romans

014:001 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

014:002 **For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.**

014:003 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

- 014:004 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.
- 014:005 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.
- 014:006 **He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.**
- 014:007 **For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.**
- 014:008 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.
- 014:009 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.
- 014:010 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.
- 014:011 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.
- 014:012 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.
- 014:013 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.
- 014:014 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.
- 014:015 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.
- 014:016 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:
- 014:017 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.
- 014:018 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.
- 014:019 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.
- 014:020 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.
- 014:021 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.
- 014:022 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.
- 014:023 **And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin**

Do Not Offend Others

1 Corinthians

- 008:004 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.
- 008:005 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)
- 008:006 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.
- 008:007 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

008:008 **But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.**

008:009 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of your's become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

008:010 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

008:011 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

008:012 But when ye sin So, against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

008:013 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

Issues - Reparations

This issue has actually expanded over time. As of this writing, there are 3 separate issues. One is slave reparations. Another is reparations for injustice – ie, discrimination by society. Another is reparations for Native Americans.

People both for and against reparations have tried using bible verses to justify their position. So, let's look at some key verses.

Slave Reparations

The bible condemns slavery (see the section on it in this write up). There is some precedence in the bible for slave reparations. It starts with the story of how the Jewish people were enslaved in Egypt. After 400 years in Egypt, God raised up Moses to lead them out and into Palestine. But the Egyptian pharaoh did not want them to leave. God said to Moses:

Genesis

003:020 And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

003:021 And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty.

003:022 But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

And the fulfillment is recorded a little later.

Genesis

012:031 And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said.

012:032 Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.

012:033 And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.

012:034 And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneadingtroughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.

012:035 And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment:

012:036 And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, So, that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.

There are also bible verses which condemn employers who do not pay.

Jeremiah

022:013 Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work;

Leviticus

019:013 Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.

Deuteronomy

024:014 Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates:

024:015 At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.

James

005:004 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

But then, when and to whom are reparations due? And who should pay them?

First, notice the following verses.

Ezekiel

018:001 The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,

018:002 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

018:003 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.

018:004 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, So, also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

018:005 But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right,

018:006 And hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman,

018:007 And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment;

018:008 He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man,

018:009 Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD.

018:010 If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that doeth the like to any one of these things,

018:011 And that doeth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife,

018:012 Hath oppressed the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination,

018:013 Hath given forth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.

018:014 **Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like,**

018:015 **That hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife,**

- 018:016 Neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment,
- 018:017 That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live.
- 018:018 As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity.
- 018:019 Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.
- 018:020 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

2 Kings

- 014:006 But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

2 Chronicles

- 025:004 But he slew not their children, but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.

Jeremiah

- 031:029 In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.
- 031:030 **But every one shall die for his own iniquity:** every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

Should people who live 150+ years after slavery ended be required to pay for the sins of their fathers? Should immigrants and their descendants who came to the US after slavery ended pay for the sins of other people? Remember, when the government pays, it is paid from taxes collected from people, or taxes from corporations who pass that cost in prices to people. So, in the end, some group of people have to pay. But who is still alive from the slave era? And who today has profited from slavery?

Bible Verses Incorrectly Used To 'Justify' Reparations

The following passage is sometimes used to try to justify reparations.

Exodus

- 034:006 And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,
- 034:007 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; **visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.**
- 034:008 And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.

There are a few problems with using this verse to justify reparations. First, it does not nullify what is said in Ezekiel 18:14-20. And remember, the bible does not contradict itself. So, saying Exodus 34:7 justifies children paying reparations is incorrect. Second, notice the following passage which is nearly identical but gives more details.

Exodus

020:005 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

020:006 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

So, you see this applies to multiple generations of them that hate God.

At this point, there is no reason to list a third flaw in those people's argument about Exodus 34. But this writer wants to point out, even if one accepted the argument that Exodus 34 applies to reparations, which it does not, then those who believe it must realize it does not apply to children of people who came to the US after slavery ended. But this is unimportant because Exodus 34 does not apply to reparations.

Another similar passage is

Numbers

014:013 And Moses said unto the LORD, Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them;)

014:014 And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.

014:015 Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying,

014:016 Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness.

014:017 And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying,

014:018 The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

014:019 Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.

014:020 And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word:

014:021 But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.

014:022 Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice;

014:023 Surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:

014:024 But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.

But notice the context it is in – it was in regards to the Israelies in the Wilderness. And the same objections apply to that interpretation of this passage.

Some Secular Views on Slave Reparations

Two arguments for reparations, 150+ years after slavery ended, are:

1. The US prospered from slavery and the current wealth in this country is the result of slave labor. So, all who live in the US today have prospered because of it.
2. If the slaves from 150+ years ago had received their just pay, their descendants today would be far wealthier.

The first statement above is debatable. During the American Civil War which was fought to end slavery, the slave states were rather thoroughly decimated by the war. Union soldiers destroyed many of the railroads. And what they did not destroy, was almost completely worn out. Cities, towns, farms, plantations were burned to the ground. Livestock and crops were taken by Union troops in search of food. The economy of both the Northern and Southern states was fully geared toward the war for 4 years, wealth that was consumed by war. The war cost the Union (Northern) states over \$6 billion and the Southern states over \$2 billion. That does not include over \$3 billion in Union soldier pensions. The Union lost over 330,000 soldiers trying to free the slaves and many more were wounded. So, one question is, if one subtracts the cost of the war from the value of slavery, was the US wealthier after the war because of slavery?

Even if, and this is a big if, the country is wealthy today because of slavery, then all people share in it, not just the white people. And those who claim the country is wealthier because of slavery ignore the hundreds of millions of hard-working Americans who contributed to the US economy – especially since 1865. What percentage of the average family's wealth is claimed to be from the slavery of 200 years ago?

Another question is, how much wealthier would the descendants of slaves be if the slaves had been paid? Would they have inherited any of that wealth? Would prior generations have spent that wealth on themselves? So, little if anything be passed down to the children?

Most European Americans have ancestors who were serfs in Europe. Should European nations pay them reparations too?

Discrimination Reparations

Some state that people who were discriminated against should be paid by the government for failing to write and enforce laws preventing discrimination which resulted in a loss of income, etc.

Although there are bible passages against discrimination, I am not aware of any that discuss reparations for it.

From a secular point of view, there have been several government programs to try to alleviate discrimination. For example, there have been programs to ensure minority businesses get a percentage of government contracts even when they are not the lowest bidder, etc. Many colleges and universities have given some preference to minority students in admissions even when their grades and test scores are lower than others. And the Civil Rights Acts of 1957, 1964, 1968 did much to alleviate the problem.

Native American Reparations

A brief review of previous topic may be helpful here. First, the earth and everything in it belongs to God, not mankind.

Leviticus

025:023 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

Psalms

024:001 The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

And God determines the boundaries of nations.

Acts

017:026 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

And God sometimes removes nations So, others may occupy the land. Several examples were given earlier in the sections on judgement. The following is another example. In the following passage, God tells Abram that his descendants will live in Egypt 400 years before they can take the 'promised land' of Palestine. This is because 'the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full'.

Genesis

015:013 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

015:014 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

015:015 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

015:016 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

So once the Amorites crossed a line with God, God had the Israelis evict them from the land.

God does not always use good people to destroy a nation. The following passages in Isaiah chapter 10 are some of the most revealing in the Bible how God punishes nations. Here, God declares He is using the nation of Assyria to punish Israel for their sin. Then after He uses Assyria to do this, He punished Assyria for its sins. Notice that God compares Assyria to a rod which God wheels. Also note that the Assyrians were no better than Israel. Yet God used them to punish Israel.

Isaiah

010:005 O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

010:006 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

Much of what was done to Native Americans was against biblical teaching. For example, the bible condemns the breaking of treaties.

Why Did God Permit Slavery in the US ?

Why did God permit slavery in the US? There is nothing in the bible that speaks directly of this. The final books of the bible were written around 100AD and there were no prophecies of a country like the US.

But the bible also says

2 Timothy

003:016 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

003:017 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

So let's look at some possible reasons.

One possible clue is in the book of Acts. This passage was part of a discussion among the disciples on preaching the Gospel to non-Jews (or Gentiles).

Acts

015:013 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:

015:014 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

015:015 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

015:016 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

015:017 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

So did God allow slavery as a way to call out or gather a people for Himself from a pagan region of the world? I do not know.

Or was God punishing these people? I do not know. But let's look at an example of a similar judgement of God on the nation of Israel and see what the bible says about them. There are actually several examples in the bible on when the nation of Israel no longer believed and worshiped God. Instead, they worshiped other gods. Please especially note the highlighted verses.

Ezekiel

006:001 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

006:002 Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them,

006:003 And say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys; Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places.

006:004 And your altars shall be desolate, and your images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your idols.

006:005 And I will lay the dead carcases of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round about your altars.

006:006 In all your dwellingplaces the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate; that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your works may be abolished.

006:007 And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and **ye shall know that I am the LORD.**

006:008 Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries.

006:009 And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.

006:010 And **they shall know that I am the LORD**, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them.

006:011 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.

006:012 He that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish my fury upon them.

006:013 Then shall ye know that I am the LORD, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols.

006:014 So will I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath, in all their habitations: and **they shall know that I am the LORD.**

In the above passages, God declares He will punish them for idolatry and turning their back on Him. God also declares that this severe punishment will also cause them to turn back to Him.

The next chapter in Ezekiel is similar to chapter 6. But notice verse 24. God was not using a good nation to punish them. He was using an evil nation to do it. Actually, this (using an evil nation to punish them) is mentioned several times in the bible.

Ezekiel

007:001 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

007:002 Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto the land of Israel; An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land.

007:003 Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abominations.

007:004 And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

007:005 Thus saith the Lord GOD; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come.

007:006 An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come.

007:007 The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains.

007:008 Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger upon thee: and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense thee for all thine abominations.

007:009 And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense thee according to thy ways and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the LORD that smiteth.

007:010 Behold the day, behold, it is come: the morning is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded.

007:011 Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness: none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of their's: neither shall there be wailing for them.

007:012 The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.

007:013 For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, although they were yet alive: for the vision is touching the whole multitude thereof, which shall not return; neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life.

007:014 They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but none goeth to the battle: for my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.

007:015 The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within: he that is in the field shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.

007:016 But they that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.

007:017 All hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall be weak as water.

007:018 They shall also gird themselves with sackcloth, and horror shall cover them; and shame shall be upon all faces, and baldness upon all their heads.

007:019 They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity.

- 007:020 As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty: but they made the images of their abominations and of their detestable things therein: therefore have I set it far from them.
- 007:021 And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil; and they shall pollute it.
- 007:022 My face will I turn also from them, and they shall pollute my secret place: for the robbers shall enter into it, and defile it.
- 007:023 Make a chain: for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence.
- 007:024 **Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses:** I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease; and their holy places shall be defiled.
- 007:025 Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none.
- 007:026 Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients.
- 007:027 The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and **they shall know that I am the LORD.**

So why did God allow slavery, which the bible also condemns? I do not know. Maybe the above passages give some insight into possibilities.

Issues – Climate Change

Please read the chapter intitled “Behind The Veil – God Controls The Weather” first. That chapter documents that God controls the weather. This chapter is written based on the assumption that you read that chapter first.

Most people believe that weather patterns have changed over the last 50 years and continue to do so. Assuming that is true, why does God allow climate change, or weather pattern changes, to occur which have serious consequences on humanity? Does He allow it because the world uses too much fossil fuels and He opposes it? Or is it for other reasons. The reasons fall into 2 broad categories.

1. This is a teaching/learning moment for people
2. This is a punishment from God

Please note that this writer is not a scientist and makes no such claims.

Tenants

The bible teaches that we are tenants, not owners, of the land and what is in the world. This was covered in the chapter entitled, “Overview - The Land Belongs to God - We Are Only Tenants”.

Teaching/Learning Moment for People

Proverbs

025:002 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.

The bible is a book revealing God to us, and a path to a saving relationship with Him. It is not a science book, nor a technical manual. It provides only the minimal information in those areas for its mission – bringing people into a saving relationship with God. Most Christians wish the first 3 chapters of Genesis regarding the creation were greatly expanded. And some have wrongly criticized the bible for using terms like sunrise and sunset (wrong because we still use the terms today).

But why did God not give us more information on science and technology. The short answer, that is His will. He wants people to search things out, discover things, invent things. That is part of our mission.

God set up certain laws of nature. It is for us to learn them and apply them.

So, is climate change one of them? Should people study the matter and live within the constraints? And what are those constraints? According to many scientists, climate change is caused largely by too much carbon dioxide gas (CO2) in the air. And they say some other gasses like methane also contribute to it.

Assuming this is true, then yes, it makes sense that good tenants should take care of another’s (God’s) property, especially when it affects the health of people.

So why is this an issue today and not 100 years ago? One must remember that around 1960, there were only about 3 billion people in the world, and a larger percentage used less technology (cars, air conditioners) than in the 2020’s. The population of the US was just shy of 180 million people. Today (2022), there are over 8 billion people with well over 300 million living in the US. So, a major contributing factor in rising CO2 emissions has been caused by a population boom.

Today, there is growing demand that technology be developed to eliminate the need for most fossil fuels because they add to the CO2 levels. Some people have stated that the technology of 2022 is not good enough to accomplish that. No major politician has suggested lowering the population levels to reduce CO2.

The technology of 2022 is not good enough to maintain current standards of living and significantly reduce CO2. For example, solar cells and windmills do not produce enough electricity to eliminate fossil fuels. And car battery technology is not good enough because

1. Car batteries will only take a vehicle up to 300 miles, or 80 miles when towing a trailer before having to be recharged. The mileage is even less in cold weather because their chemical reactions are slowed by the cold.
2. They take too long to recharge
3. They only last 8 years. If a vehicle is discontinued in that time, replacement batteries may not be available for it.
4. Electric cars are more expensive and less affordable for people.

So, choices have to be made. Some alternatives are

1. Ignore CO2 until newer, better technology exists
2. Implement current technology and ask people to reduce the quality of their lives
3. Implement policies/incentives to lower the population.

Implementing newer technology to reduce CO2 appears to be consistent with biblical teaching to this writer. But this writer is unsure if this approach will be successful in the short term (in the next 100 years). Once again, this writer is not a scientist. Regardless, we should act as good tenants. Remember

Galatians

006:007 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

006:008 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Sometimes the punishment is simple and obvious. For example, drink too much alcohol and it will destroy your health. Perhaps climate change is similar to this?

Punishment from God

2 Samuel

021:001 **Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.**

There is more to this story. The chapter "Government Responsibilities – Maintain Law and Order" goes into more detail. But the point here is that this is an example how God changed the weather to punish a nation. So, why was God punishing Israel in this case? It goes back to the following passage.

Numbers

035:031 **Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.**

035:032 And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest.

035:033 **So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.**

035:034 Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel

God holds a country, the government especially, responsible if law and order is not maintained. In this case, it is speaking of punishing murderers. So, in this example, God punished the nation of Israel by withholding rain because the house/family of Saul was not punished for their murders of the Gibeonites.

In the following Bible passage, God declares curses when the nation did not obey Him. Notice especially verse 24

Deuteronomy

028:015 But it shall come to pass, **if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God**, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

028:016 **Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.**

028:017 **Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.**

028:018 **Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land**, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

028:019 Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

028:020 The LORD shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.

028:021 **The LORD shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it.**

028:022 The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.

028:023 And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.

028:024 **The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.**

And it is repeated in Leviticus. The key verses are

Leviticus

026:014 **But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;**

026:032 **And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.**

So God has used weather to punish the nation of Israel.

How does this relate to climate change? We know that God controls the weather (see the chapter entitled "Behind the Veil - God Controls Weather"). So, it is possible that God is punishing this nation, and the entire world, for some great sin(s). But is this because of "the sin of using fossil fuels"? Consider this, consider the following problems (or punishments from God?)

1. Climate change / higher temperatures
2. Droughts in western US
3. Wildfires in western US
4. Floods and worse hurricanes
5. Open border with Mexico allowing millions of people to immigrate illegally into the US

6. High inflation
7. Constant wars around the world
8. High crime rates
9. Covid pandemic
10. HIV / AIDS
11. Bad government

Any / all of these could be punishments from God. Remember what Jesus said,

Matthew

024:006 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

024:007 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

024:008 **All these are the beginning of sorrows.**

Because there are So, many problems, many believe that God is allowing the climate to change not because of using fossil fuels, but because of some great sins of mankind. Possibly the vast rejection of God and the bible by the large majority of the world's population. Or perhaps because if some great sin such as abortion or government's lack of protection for its citizens. The bible teaches that things get worse in the world and then the Great Tribulation Period will arrive which is described as the worse period in earth's history. Why? Because God will use tragedy to draw people to Him.

Issues - Christian Nationalism?

Starting in the early 2020's, some people started using a new phrase, "Christian Nationalism". What this term means depends on who uses it. But some key parts of it may include, depending on one's definition,

1. The US is a Christian nation. God founded US was founded as a Christian nation and the US remains a Christian nation. The US is part of God's plan
2. The US government should pass laws in agreement with, and advocate Christian values
3. There is no strict separation of church and state in the US constitution. It only says government cannot make laws regarding religion or its practice.
4. The government should allow religious symbols in public areas.
5. Prayer should be allowed in public schools
6. Those who participated in the Jan 6, 2021 uprising in Washington DC at the US Capital were doing God's will.
7. Christians should pass laws controlling all aspects of life, like the Taliban in Afghanistan do.

However, Christianity Today defined it as "the belief that the American nation is defined by Christianity, and that the government should take active steps to keep it that way,".

Is "Christian Nationalism" Christian? This writer believes it depends on what one's definition is. So, what does the bible teach on each of these points?

The US Is a Christian Nation?

This was largely covered in the chapter entitled

"Overview - The Land Belongs to God - We Are Only Tenants"

The bible teaches that we are only tenants on the land and that God can toss the tenants out when they turn their backs on Him, and God can replace them with another people. Sometimes God used evil nations like Assyria to punish a nation. Sometimes God allowed another people to take over, like the Hebrews did after they left Egypt and entered Canaan. It appears that is what happened when Europeans, mainly Christian, came to the Americas.

Is the US still a Christian nation? That is a matter of opinion. Yes, a large percentage of the US population says it is Christian. And many of the laws are based on biblical principles. But there is a growing push to let everyone live anyway they want without any morality laws, similar to the society in Israel during the time of the judges.

Laws Based on Christian Values

This is largely covered in the sections entitled

Overview - Governments Are To Serve God

Overview - National Blessings For Obeying God And Curses For Not

In what is called the Lord's Prayer (given by Jesus), Christians pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". This is broad and wide ranging. It includes a request that the earth be brought under God's will. And that includes the laws in the world.

The secular world wants none of this. What they advocate for is the type of society described in the book of Judges, before the Hebrew nation had a king. The great sin during this time was that “every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25).

What should laws be based on if not the bible? If biblical teaching and morality is tossed aside, then there is no basis for any morality laws. This is because that secular society today wants to do away with all ‘discrimination’. But all morality laws discriminate against someone. So, with that secular view, there can be no morality laws.

And what does that leave the US? It means that the US must eventually adopt the morality of Sodom and Gomorrah, and with all the evil consequences on its citizens. Remember

2 Peter

002:001 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

002:002 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

002:003 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

002:005 **And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;**

002:006 **And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;**

Religious Symbols in Public Areas

This writer does not know of any bible passages on this topic. Requiring this does not appear to be part of Christian teaching. However, if anti-Christian symbols are allowed in public areas, it seems only fair that Christian symbols be allowed.

Prayers in Public Schools

This was largely covered in the chapters entitled

Issues – Schools

Issues – Interfaith Prayers

In summary, interfaith prayers are wrong. So, requiring group prayers in public schools is both contrary to the First Amendment and biblical teaching. However, preventing private prayers would also violate the First Amendment.

Also, public schools are no longer fit for Christian children. Their morality and teachings often conflict with biblical teachings. Christian students cannot fully practice their faith. In short, they teach a type of secular or humanistic religion which is contrary to Christianity, and in that way, violate the First Amendment’s freedom of religion guarantees

January 6, 2021 Protests

This subject was largely covered in the following chapters

Citizenship Responsibilities - Obey Government

Citizenship Responsibilities - Protests, Riots and Looting

We are to obey government So, long as their requirements do not conflict with God's commands. This writer knows of nothing in the bible which requires protesting. And there is a danger in protesting because some in the group may do unlawful things. Remember

James

001:020 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Christian Taliban?

This is closely related to the topic, "Laws Based on Christian Values", discussed earlier.

Some people have compared Evangelical Christians to the Taliban because Christians want laws based on biblical teaching. They claim they will lose freedoms if laws are based on Christian values.

But this is an extreme view. The Taliban force men to grow beards. They force women to wear burkas. They outlaw music. They forbid education of girls. They execute Muslims who convert to another religion. It is a rather brutal religious code.

Basically, the secular population wants what Sodom and Gomorrah had, no morality laws (laws against 'victimless' crimes). Christians oppose that idea because of the impact it can have on their families and the country. Remember, God eventually destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. And living in those 2 cities destroyed Lot's family. For more on this, see the chapter entitled,

Behind the Veil – Story of Lot / Living in a Godless Society

This Writer's Definition of Christian Nationalism

Christians have as much right to vote in US elections as anyone else. They are free to vote to support whomever they wish. If there is a Christian Nationalism, it must be in conformity with biblical teaching.

Issues – Critical Race Theory (CRT)

In 2021, something called the Critical Race Theory became a controversial topic in the US. It was claimed that it was being taught in grade and high schools and it promoted anti-White (anti-European American) racism.

So, what is it? How does it apply to everyday life? Are there any biblical principles which should be examined?

This writer is not an expert in CRT. So, he is relying on a description of it from www.britanica.com.

This write up is divided into the following sections.

1. What is CRT?
2. Problems with basic tenants
3. Problems with democracy
4. The race card
5. Examples of how it applies to everyday life
6. Examples of how it does not apply to everyday life
7. Perceived problems
8. Biblical principles

CRT is largely a secular issue and therefore most comments in this section are without biblical backup.

What is CRT?

CRT originated in the 1970's and was refined in the 1980's. In summary, CRT claims

1. The term 'race' in the US is based on a person's culture, not any natural or biological feature of a person.
2. The US legal system and set of laws is racist because it creates and maintains social, economic, and political inequities between Whites and Blacks (or more generally, people of color including Asians, Hispanics, etc).

CRT's basic tenants include

1. The term 'race' is based on culture, not physical traits
2. Racism is normal in the US, and it is normal for non-Whites to experience it
3. Changes in the law or legal system benefits Whites more than non-Whites
4. Negative stereotypes of non-Whites are based on the needs and desires of Whites
5. All people are in multiple groups, such as African-American, woman, Christian, etc
6. People of color are uniquely qualified to speak for others in their group in regard to racism and its effects

CRT also advocate that policies and laws should cause equal outcomes for all people. Being 'color blind' does not result in this goal.

NOTE: For the remainder of this write-up, the term 'race' and 'racism' refer to the commonly used definition, not the CRT definition unless specifically mentioned.

Problem with Basic Tenants

Tenant 1 – CRT made up its own definition of race which does not conform to what is commonly used. This revised definition implies that people who do not like a particular culture are racist – which is not necessarily true.

Tenant 2 - CRT ignores the fact that European Americans can also be the victims of racism and implies racism is only a one-way street.

Tenant 3 – Changes in the law are legal So, long as they treat everyone equally. But CRT advocates that equality is bad if it does not result in equal outcomes.

Tenant 4 – European Americans are taught not to stereotype people.

Tenant 6 – Although this may be largely true, one must still determine if their views are biased in any way. Also, sometimes people of a given group are racially biased against themselves without noticing it. For example, I have heard some say they cannot succeed because of their race.

Another problem is that CRT is often mis-applied to situations which are misunderstood, and not racist.

Another problem is that its origins date from the 1970's and 1980's when society was different from that of today.

Another problem is that it tends to accuse all European Americans.

Another problem is that CRT opposes 'color blindness' of laws and government because securing equality of opportunity regardless of race does not guarantee equality of outcome based on race. What should be important is equitable treatment and that is opposed by CRT.

And finally, CRT has sometimes been used to criticize broad groups of people (especially European Americans) for what others (European Americans) did in the past, in turn, causing more racism.

The idea that not liking someone's culture makes one a racist is wrong and hypocritical. Most people do not like the Taliban's strict Muslim Shiara culture, which prohibits music, restricts freedoms especially for women, restricts women's education and work opportunities, and the like. So, does that make people who do not like that culture racists? Of course not. Soccer is a big part of British culture. So, if one does not like soccer, does that mean they are anti-British culture and therefore racist? Of course not. There are tenants in CRT with are absurd IF one thinks thru it and analyzes it.

Problem with Democracy

One basic problem in government is that everyone wants something from government but no one wants to pay for those things (a bit of an exaggeration but basically true). The way this works in democracies is that a majority is formed, they vote themselves what they want and they stick the minority with the bill (once again, a bit of exaggeration). These divisions could be based on race, religious beliefs, wealth/poverty, location where people live, and the like. These divisions change over time.

The Race Card

Calls of racism are often valid. But sometimes they are not. Sometimes things happen and they have nothing to do with racism. Perhaps a person has been a victim of racism So, often, that that is the first reason they consider when something bad happens. Or perhaps they have heard So, many stories about racism, that is what they first think when something bad happens. When a false accusation is made, that is playing the race card.

Examples of How It Applies to Everyday Life

The following examples is not a comprehensive list. And some of these examples are from the past and do not apply today. But this sample shows ways in which the laws, or lack of laws, promoted racism.

Example 1 – Voting Rights

For many years after the American Civil War, governments in southern states enacted laws restricting who could vote. They were designed to prevent African Americans from voting. For example, some places required a fee be paid to vote and African Americans generally could not afford the fee. In other places, people were required to be able to read. Problem was, most African Americans after the war could not read and did not have access to classes to teach them. Even if they did qualify to vote, organizations like the KKK might kill them if they tried and the governments did little, if anything, to stop the KKK.

Example 2 – Separate but Equal Schools

In some places, there were separate schools for Whites and Blacks. Often this was because Whites and Blacks lived in different neighborhoods and students attended the neighborhood schools. But regardless, governments often provided more funding for schools in White neighborhoods. Eventually, courts ordered governments to bus students in White neighborhoods to Black schools and vice-versa in order to force governments to fund schools equally.

Example 3 – Job Hiring

There are a number of ways that companies could be unintentionally discriminating against people. For example:

1. A company may notify its employees that it will be hiring more people. This could be by word of mouth or by posting a notice. But if this is all the company is doing to recruit people, this can lead to unintentional discrimination. This is because employees generally only socialize (know) others of their own race. Therefore, companies must advertise job openings in ways that cover their entire community from which people are likely to apply.
2. Some companies were mostly promoting White men. This may have been intentional or non-intentional. Regardless which way it was, larger companies were sometimes required by government or courts to keep lists of people in management by race and sex in order to prove they were not discriminating.

Example 4 – Gerrymandering of Political Districts

Actually, this affects many different groups depending on where one lives. In order to dilute the voting power of a given group, political leaders of another group periodically redraw the boundaries of congressional districts. For example, if party A is in power when the boundaries are redrawn, then they will try to draw it so 51% of the voters support party A and 49% support party B. Since a candidate only needs 51% of the vote, that district will likely elect a candidate from party A. This is called gerrymandering. Do it enough and there will be few districts that will vote for party B, and those districts will likely be 90% for party B and 10% for party A.

This sometimes has been used to limit political power of African Americans. It has also been used in some states to limit political power of Republicans, and in other states, political power of Democrats.

Examples of How It Does Not Apply to Everyday Life

Example 1 – Zoning Laws

Buildings must conform to local building codes. These codes may include whether buildings can be residential or commercial, the minimum size of the property/lot, type of construction, height of the building, etc.

Many communities have zoning laws which require only single-family buildings can be constructed. And they may specify a minimum lot size. This is to insure a certain standard of living. Some have called such laws racist because poor

people, often African American or Hispanic, cannot afford to live there. They correctly state that if the zoning laws were eliminated, they could afford to build densely populated condos or apartments, low-income housing. But the zoning codes are not there to prevent different cultures from living there. They are there to protect a standard of living.

Example 2 – Food and Health Care Deserts

There are fewer stores which sell food in poor neighborhoods. There are fewer hospitals and doctor offices in poor neighborhoods. Some have claimed this is because of racism.

The real source of the problem is that there is more crime in poor neighborhoods making it harder for a company to make a reasonable profit. And it is more likely that a doctor or hospital will not get paid (at least not the full amount) in a poor neighborhood because people are less likely to have adequate health insurance.

Example 3 – Eminent Domain

Federal, state and local governments sometimes start projects which require purchasing land from its citizens, sometimes against their will. The legal principle/law is referred to as eminent domain. Often when governments do this, they chose properties with the lowest values. These properties have often been owned (or rented by) African Americans or other minorities. For this reason, some have claimed (following CRT principles) that the projects were racist because they disproportionately affected African Americans. This is an example where a project was 'color blind' but had a disproportionate effect on minorities.

The point is, equality does not guarantee the same outcome for all people. So, is equality wrong? The Declaration of Independence is NOT biblical. But the first 2 sentences of the second paragraph are below illustrating a founding principle of this country.

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness—That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

So, if equality is wrong, then is this founding principle of the United States wrong?

Perceived Problems

One problem is the dwelling on the past. People need to learn from the past. But people do not want to live in the past. CRT seems to dwell in the past.

Another perceived problem is that CRT promotes a type of racism, stating that being color blind is unfair because it does not guarantee equal results.

CRT states that racism is based on culture, not any physical traits. If that is true, is racism wrong? When this writer grew up, we were taught America was the great melting pot. People from many nations and cultures blended together here. However, that was largely not true of African Americans – probably because how they were treated.

Biblical Principles

Equality

This was largely covered in the section entitled, “Issues – Discrimination / Favoritism / Racism”. In short, God teaches us in the bible that He “is no respecter of persons”, and neither should we be. God does not regard someone better because of their wealth, their social position, their earthly authority, their sex, their race, etc.

Regarding discrimination on culture, the bible does not specifically address this.

Judgement

The bible also teaches people are judged by what they do, not what their ancestors did.

Ezekiel

018:020 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

Jeremiah

031:029 In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.

031:030 But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

This is covered more in the section entitled, “Issues – Reparations”.

Seek Justice

Micah

006:008 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Isaiah

001:017 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Zechariah

007:009 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

007:010 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

Proverbs

029:007 The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.

1 Peter

003:008 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

003:009 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

003:010 For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

003:011 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

003:012 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

Pastor Corey Brooks View On CRT

A January 17, 2022, Fox News article reported Pastor Corey Brooks views on CRT. He is a Christian African American minister in Chicago. The following summarize his criticisms of CRT.

1. CRT claims race is the most important trait when determining one's position in life, their ability to be successful, and how others will treat them. Christianity teaches one's most important trait is their relationship with God, being a born-again believer.
2. CRT claims people are 'racist to the core', which is not true. It causes African Americans to believe European Americans are oppressors and should not be trusted, thus dividing communities.
3. CRT claims capitalism is a form of white supremacy. This discourages African American youths to apply themselves or participate in the economy.

He compares CRT to Marxism or communism because it tries to divide people – here based on race instead of class. Then it tries to instill hatred towards capitalism.

Issues – Interfaith Prayers

There are occasions when people from different faiths may want to pray or worship together. For example, some people may want public prayer in public schools. There are also prayers among people of different faiths before the start of sessions in the US Senate and the House of Representatives. But what are the biblical teaches regarding this practice?

Do Not Pray With Nonbelievers

2 John

001:007 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

001:008 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

001:009 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

001:010 **If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:**

001:011 **For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.**

The above verses are both underlined and in bold type because this is a key point on this issue.

The bible also warns about too close of an association with non-Christians.

2 Corinthians

006:014 **Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers:** for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

006:015 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

006:016 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

006:017 **Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.**

This does not mean we cannot be friends with non-believers. But it does mean we cannot worship, pray, or accept non-Christian life styles.

Why?

Why are they called 'evil deeds'? Because teachers of other religions lead people away from Jesus and God, and this results in people being lost to all eternity (ie, hell). As the bible says,

John

003:036 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John

014:006 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Acts

004:012 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

1 John

005:011 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

005:012 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

In summary, Christians should only pray and worship with other Christians. Praying or worshiping with non-Christians shows support and agreement with those religions and that is wrong.

The following is a warning about false teachers and prophets.

Galatians

001:006 I marvel that ye are So, soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

001:007 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

001:008 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

001:009 As we said before, So, say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

001:010 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

001:011 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

001:012 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

God Does Not 'Hear' Prayers of Non-Believers

Another point is this: God will hear the prayer of non-believers who turn toward Him, and from sin. But that is the only prayer God will hear. God hears the prayers of those who believe in Him. But God does not hear the requests of non-believers (non-Christians), except a prayer of repentance and turning towards Him. See below passages.

Jeremiah

029:012 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

029:013 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

John

009:031 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

Psalms

018:040 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me.

018:041 They cried, but there was none to save them: even unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

Psalms

034:015 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

034:016 The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

034:017 The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

Psalms

066:018 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

Proverbs

015:029 The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

Proverbs

028:009 He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

Micah

003:004 Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

Zechariah

007:009 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

007:010 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

007:011 But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

007:012 Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.

007:013 Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; So, they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:

James

005:016 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

So to conclude,

1. What is the point of praying with non-Christians? God will not hear their prayers unless it is one of repentance and turning toward Him in faith/belief in Jesus.
2. Praying or worshiping with non-Christians is tacit acceptance and agreement with the beliefs of other religions. This is wrong. This is evil because other religions lead people away from God and to eternal damnation. Christians should not do anything that might be as seeing they condone other religions.
3. It is sinful to accept teachers of other religions. See 2 John 1:10-11 quoted earlier.

This does not mean Christians cannot be friends with people of other faiths. It does mean Christians should do nothing religious, like praying, with people of other faiths.

Please note that there are many Christian denominations, including Roman Catholic. Praying with fellow Christians is fine So, long as they share the same faith/beliefs in Jesus as true God, true Man and our Savior.

Behind the Veil – One Religion Movement

There seems to be a growing ecumenical movement which is trying to bring all different Christian denominations and religions together. Why might this be a topic on biblical teaching about government? It is because the bible teaches in the last days there will be a 1 world religion.

Bible Is Inerrant

Before delving into that topic, it is important to re-iterate one important truth which is, the bible is inerrant and the bible contains all we need for salvation as is written

2 Timothy

003:016 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

003:017 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

And the scriptures are infallible.

Matthew

022:029 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

John

017:017 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

In this last passage, Jesus is saying they errored because they did not know the scriptures, implying the scriptures are infallible.

Also, the bible's teaching remains relevant and does not become obsolete.

Matthew

005:017 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

005:018 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

And the teaching of the bible is from God, and not man.

1 Corinthians

002:012 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

002:013 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

And all of scripture is important

Matthew

004:004 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

And because it is God's word, it must be fulfilled.

Matthew

026:054 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

So we know that that the bible is a sure foundation, and anything that contradicts its teachings are false.

Ecumenical Movement and Non-Christian Religions

As mentioned earlier, there is a movement that says there is truth in all religions. So, the question is, are other religions as good? Some have stated that perhaps God revealed Himself in different ways to different people. Some have said that perhaps So, long as a person lives a good life according to the 'light' they get from their religion, they will be in good standing with God. Some believe people can become gods.

But what does the bible teach about this? Should Christians accept other religions as ways to God, and to heaven? What about prophecies of the coming apostasy

First, notice the following passage.

1 Timothy

004:001 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

004:002 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

We can see this happening to some degree from that time until now, how some churches have introduced doctrine contrary to the bible.

But is God behind these other religions? Did God reveal Himself in other ways to other people? Some have pointed out that the "Angel of the Lord" referred to in the Old Testament seems to be Jesus. So, it may be possible. But did God inspire these other religions?

At the time the bible was written, many people worshipped idols made of wood or stone or precious metals. As part of their rituals, they might kill animals on altars, or burn produce on them. Some even practiced human sacrifice. Now notice the following verses from those times.

Deuteronomy

032:016 They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger.

032:017 They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

1 Corinthians

010:019 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

010:020 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

010:021 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

Leviticus

017:007 And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.

Revelation

009:020 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

009:021 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

Also notice that the bible has a broad definition of 'idoltry'.

Colossians

003:005 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Do not be surprised that false spirits can deceive many into believing they are good.

2 Corinthians

011:013 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

011:014 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

011:015 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

Romans

016:017 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

016:018 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

What Separates Christianity from Other Religions

So how can one tell if a religion is genuinely from God?

1 John

004:001 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

004:002 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

004:003 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

2 John

001:009 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

001:010 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

001:011 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Galatians

001:008 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

001:009 As we said before, So, say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

You see, the most important doctrine is faith that Jesus, God come in human form, suffered and died for our sins and resurrected from the dead. Other religions either deny

1. The deity of Jesus
2. The humanity of Jesus
3. Jesus' death and resurrection
4. By grace thru faith in Jesus and His sacrifice, we are made right with God

In short, they deny Jesus sacrifice for our sins. But this is the key to salvation. **The devil does not care how you live, or what you believe, So, long as you reject faith in Jesus which is the key to being in a right relationship with God and heaven.**

Faith In Jesus of the Bible Is All Important

Some religions teach there was a Jesus, but He either was not God, or He was not human (took on human form) or did not die and arose from death.

Notice the following bible passages which make it very clear that faith in Jesus is essential.

John

003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

003:017 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

003:018 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John

003:036 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John

014:006 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Acts

004:012 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

1 John

005:011 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

005:012 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

The devil does not care how you live, or what you believe, So, long as you reject faith in Jesus which is the key to being in a right relationship with God and heaven.

Various Heresies

Listing and defending against all the various heresies that have come up over the centuries is beyond the scope of this write up. If one studies the bible (and there are many great study tools on the internet), one can easily defend against them.

One of the heresies is that people can become gods. This is a popular belief among people in the New Age movement. This issue was addressed in the section entitled, "Government Responsibilities – Are Rules Gods?". Please see that section if interested.

Prophecy - One World Religion During the Great Tribulation

This write up is not a comprehensive study of the last days or the Great Tribulation period that is to come. That type of study needs a separate book in and of itself. But since this section is about the one religion movement, it is worth while discussing the one world religion prophesied in the coming Great Tribulation period.

Revelation

012:007 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

012:008 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

012:009 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Verses 7-9 above are history, about how Satan and his angels were cast out of heaven. Notice verse 9 uses the name/term 'dragon' when referring to Satan. This is important to notice this before reading the following passage.

Revelation

013:001 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

013:002 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

013:003 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

013:004 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

013:005 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

013:006 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

013:007 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

013:008 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

013:009 If any man have an ear, let him hear.

- 013:010 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.
- 013:011 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.
- 013:012 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.
- 013:013 And he doeth great wonders, So, that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,
- 013:014 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.
- 013:015 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.
- 013:016 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:
- 013:017 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.
- 013:018 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

There is a lot of symbolism in the above passage. But in brief, the first beast is a world ruler. The second is a spiritual leader. And the dragon is Satan. The Lamb is Jesus. Notice verse 4 above which states they worship Satan and the beast. Notice verse 8 above which states all will worship the beast except, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" – meaning all will worship the beast except those who believe in Jesus, aka, born again Christians.

Another thing which is important to notice is verse 2. And who is the power behind the first beast? Who gave the first beast his position? The dragon, also known as, Satan.

For people who want more detail, there are some very good books which go thru Revelation verse by verse.

So, you see, the 'one world religion' is not part of Christianity, nor will it ever be, except perhaps in the minds of those who do not understand what it is to be a true Christian.

Behind the Veil – Story of Lot / Living in a Godless Society

This section is a repeat of part of what was written in the section entitled, “Issues – Schools”. This is because it is a very important story with a message for Christians. Also, it may be easier for people to go back and find this story if it is in a separate section.

The story of Lot is a great example of what can occur when people fail to follow God’s commandment on this. In this story, Lot, a Godly man and nephew of Abraham, chooses to live near Sodom because it was a fertile area. He ignored the fact that the people there were very evil. Later, the Bible reveals how this warped the judgment of his family and how evil his children became.

The story starts with his decision to live near Sodom.

Genesis

013:007 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

013:008 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.

013:009 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

013:010 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

013:011 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

013:012 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

013:013 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

God then warns Abraham that he plans to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because of the evil population. Abraham asks God if he would spare the cities for the sake of the righteous (good people). God agrees.

Genesis

018:020 And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;

018:021 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

018:022 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.

018:023 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

018:024 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

018:025 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

018:026 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

018:027 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and ashes:

- 018:028 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.
- 018:029 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake.
- 018:030 And he said unto him, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.
- 018:031 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.
- 018:032 And he said, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.
- 018:033 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

Next, Lot meets 2 men, some believe they were angels in human form. Notice in chapter 19 verse 5, men of Sodom asked Lot for the men So, they could 'know them' – ie, know them sexually. Notice how warped Lot's view is in verse 8 when he offers his daughters to the men outside his house. Yet he is considered 'righteous' because he is being spared by God. (Remember in chapter 15, verse 6 state the following about Abraham, So, it is true of Lot too regardless of his actions, "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.".)

Genesis

- 019:001 And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;
- 019:002 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.
- 019:003 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.
- 019:004 But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:
- 019:005 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.
- 019:006 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,
- 019:007 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not So, wickedly.
- 019:008 Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.
- 019:009 And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door.
- 019:010 But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.
- 019:011 And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: So, that they wearied themselves to find the door.

Then God destroyed the 2 cities. Notice that the 2 men (or angels) took Lot, his wife, and his 2 married daughters, but his 2 sons in law did not go, implying they did not believe in God.

Genesis

- 019:012 And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place:
- 019:013 For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.
- 019:014 And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.
- 019:015 And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.
- 019:016 And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.
- 019:017 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.
- 019:018 And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my LORD:
- 019:019 Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:
- 019:020 Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.
- 019:021 And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.
- 019:022 Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.
- 019:023 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.
- 019:024 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;
- 019:025 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.
- 019:026 But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

The epilog to this story is an illustration on how corrupt Lot's daughters were. They caused their father to become drunk and sleep with them.

Genesis

- 019:030 And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.
- 019:031 And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth:
- 019:032 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.
- 019:033 And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.
- 019:034 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.
- 019:035 And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.
- 019:036 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

And finally

2 Peter

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

Ezekiel

016:049 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

016:050 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.

Another bible passage also alludes to why these cities were destroyed.

Jude

001:007 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

This story of Lot illustrates how living in a godless community corrupted him and his family.

1. Lot's judgment was corrupted by offering his daughters to the men of Sodom.
2. Some of his daughters married godless men who were later destroyed in the city – both those daughters and their husbands.
3. His wife failed to believe and died.
4. His unmarried daughters caused their father to get drunk and have children by him.
5. 2 Peter indicates only Lot was a just person, implying he lost his entire family to all eternity, meaning they will spend eternity with the condemned. How tragic.

This illustrates

1. How living in a depraved society can destroy one's family. Notice the families of his married daughters died, his wife died, his possessions in those cities were destroyed, and his unmarried daughters were corrupted and his entire family probably went to a place of torment after dying (probably did not have a saving faith in God) because the bible only mentions that Lot was a 'godly' man.
2. The bible teaches we are saved by grace thru faith in Jesus/God and we can work towards a reward in heaven. It also teaches we still go to heaven but lose a reward by ungodly living. Lot may have lost a reward in heaven.
3. Why it is important for Christians to have their children raised (go to) Christian schools rather than godless schools, or schools lacking Christian teaching and principals.

Behind the Veil – God Select Boundaries of Countries

There are several places in the bible which state that God sets the boundaries of each nation. For example, God told the nation of Israel what their boundaries would be. But the following passage is probably the most general statement regarding this. In this verse, the Apostle Paul describes some of God's actions.

Acts

017:024 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

017:025 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

017:026 **And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;**

017:027 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

Behind the Veil - God Uses Evil Nations To Punish Less Wicked Ones

One question people sometimes ask is, “Why does not God punish evil people or an evil nation?”. Or sometimes they ask “When will God punish an evil nation?”. This was the prophet Habakkuk’s question. His nation was engaged in all sorts of sin and had fallen away from God. They may have followed some Jewish ceremonies but their hearts were far from God and they lived evil lives. God gave Habakkuk the answer and it is recorded in his book of the Bible. You may want to read these passages using a newer translation like the NIV because the sixteenth century English of the King James Version below can be a little confusing.

Babylon

It starts with Habakkuk’s question why God does not punish his nation:

Habakkuk

001:002 O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!

001:003 Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention.

001:004 Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.

Then God tells Habakkuk He is rising up the Babylonians to punish his nation.

Habakkuk

001:005 Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvelously: for I will work a work in your days which ye will not believe, though it be told you.

001:006 For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not their's.

001:007 They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.

God mentions a great sin of the Babylonians. It is that their own power was there god.

Habakkuk

001:011 Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power unto his god.

Habakkuk then asks why God would allow a nation more evil than them to destroy them.

Habakkuk

001:013 Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?

God replies, declaring He will punish Babylon for its great sins.

Habakkuk

002:008 Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

002:009 Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil!

002:010 Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul.

002:011 For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

002:012 Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!

The NIV translation is a clearer translation. Basically it is saying they have plundered many nations, destroyed cities and nations and the people in them. And it is saying woe to a nation that builds a city with bloodshed and crime.

So God used a very wicked nation to punish a less wicked one. Then God destroyed Babylon because, at least in part, it was built by stealing and plundering other nations.

Today, nations can expect the same.

Assyria

Assyria at one time was a major world power. And it was a very evil nation. Yet, God used this nation for His purposes as is recorded in Isaiah.

Isaiah

010:005 O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

010:006 I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

Behind the Veil - Thermometer Of A Country

Proverbs

029:002 When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

The nation of Judah was conquered and many were taken into captivity. Later when they returned, they rebuilt their homes but not the temple. God then sent a prophet to give the following message. In it God tells them to consider why they have not prospered and implies that it is because they were not doing His will – they did not rebuild the temple. Same is true today. If we are not prospering, consider why? Yes, God allows His children/followers to have problems or trials in their lives. This is So, they mature in Him. But when a nation is having problems, it may mean something else.

Haggai

001:003 Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying,

001:004 Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?

001:005 Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

001:006 Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.

001:007 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

And again...

Haggai

001:007 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

001:008 Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.

001:009 Ye looked for much, and, lo it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.

001:010 Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit.

001:011 And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.

God in this passage declares that He is responsible for the lack of prosperity because the people did not do what He wanted.

And again...

Haggai chapter 2

002:015 And now, I pray you, consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD:

002:016 Since those days were, when one came to an heap of twenty measures, there were but ten: when one came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty.

002:017 I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith the LORD.

002:018 Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider it.

002:019 Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: from this day will I bless you.

Behind the Veil - God Controls Weather

There are 2 important lessons in this section. One is that God controls the weather. The other is that God is actively engaged in what happens on earth. Many people believe God is far off and the earth is running like a giant wind up clock. But that is not the case. God is active in what happens on earth. This takes form in many ways including weather, politics, and the like. Somethings God is directly involved. Sometimes He allows things to happen according to His will, as in the case of Job. Notice the following passage from Job.

Job

001:001 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

001:002 And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

001:003 His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; So, that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

001:004 And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

001:005 And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

001:006 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

001:007 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

001:008 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

001:009 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

001:010 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

001:011 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

001:012 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So, Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Then several verses later...

Job

001:018 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

001:019 And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

001:020 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

So, this is an example how God permitted a great wind to cause something to happen.

But God does control the weather. It is purposeful – that is, God has a purpose behind the weather. Sometimes it is for punishment. Sometimes it is for a blessing. Sometimes it is for kindness or another reason. But in any case, God has a purpose behind the weather He sends or allows. There are many bible verses which teach this.

When the bible says something once, it is important. When it says something twice, God wants to be sure people do not miss it. In this case, God has said many times that He controls the weather.

Genesis

009:012 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

009:013 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

009:014 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

009:015 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

Exodus

014:021 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

Leviticus

026:002 Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

026:003 If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;

026:004 Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

Numbers

011:031 And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth.

Deuteronomy

011:013 And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,

011:014 That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.

Deuteronomy

028:012 The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

1 Samuel

012:017 Is it not wheat harvest to day? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.

012:018 So Samuel called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

1 Kings

008:035 When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:

008:036 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

008:037 If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be;

008:038 What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house:

008:039 Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)

2 Chronicles

006:026 When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them;

006:027 Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when thou hast taught them the good way, wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.

006:028 If there be dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting, or mildew, locusts, or caterpillars; if their enemies besiege them in the cities of their land; whatsoever sore or whatsoever sickness there be:

006:029 Then what prayer or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall know his own sore and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands in this house:

006:030 Then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men:)

Jeremiah

005:024 Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

Psalms

068:009 Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.

Psalms

078:021 Therefore the LORD heard this, and was wroth: So, a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

078:022 Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation:

078:023 Though he had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven,

078:024 And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

078:025 Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

078:026 He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind.

Psalms

107:031 Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

107:032 Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

107:033 He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground;

107:034 A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

107:035 He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.

107:036 And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation;
107:037 And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.
107:038 He blesseth them also, So, that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

Psalm

135:006 Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.
135:007 He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures.

Psalm

147:007 Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God:
147:008 Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

Psalm

148:007 Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:
148:008 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word

Proverbs

003:019 The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.
003:020 By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

Isaiah

030:023 Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

Jeremiah

010:010 But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.
010:011 Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.
010:012 He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.
010:013 When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.

Joel

002:023 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

Amos

004:006 And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

- 004:007 **And also I have withholden the rain from you**, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.
- 004:008 So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.
- 004:009 I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.
- 004:010 I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.
- 004:011 I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.
- 004:012 Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

What is especially interesting about the above passage is that God lists various hardships which He sent to Israel to try to get them to return to Him. Could it be that they did not see the connection like So, many people do not see the connection today between hardships and returning to God?

Jonah

- 001:004 But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, So, that the ship was like to be broken.

Jonah

- 004:008 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.

Nahum

- 001:003 The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.
- 001:004 He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.

Zechariah

- 010:001 Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; So, the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.

Matthew

- 005:045 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

Matthew

- 008:022 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.
- 008:023 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

008:024 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

008:025 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

008:026 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

008:027 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

Mark

004:035 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

004:036 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

004:037 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, So, that it was now full.

004:038 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

004:039 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

004:040 And he said unto them, Why are ye So, fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

004:041 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

Luke

008:022 Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

008:023 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

008:024 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

008:025 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

Acts

014:017 Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness

James

005:016 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

005:017 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

005:018 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

The following passage makes it very clear that God sometimes uses weather to punish a country for its sin. Especially notice verse 1. Many years earlier, Israel made a bad treaty with the Gibeonites. King Saul broke that treaty. Then during the reign of King David, Saul's successor, God punished Israel for that sin by withholding the rain. The passage is

021:001 **Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.**

021:002 And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.)

021:003 Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the LORD?

That is the main point here, that God caused the famine to punish Israel. Yes, this occurred many years after the murders of the Gibeonites. God does not always punish immediately. The story continues...

2 Samuel

021:004 And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you.

021:005 And they answered the king, The man that consumed us, and that devised against us that we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the coasts of Israel,

021:006 Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, whom the LORD did choose. And the king said, I will give them.

021:007 But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the LORD's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.

021:008 But the king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite:

021:009 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the LORD: and they fell all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first days, in the beginning of barley harvest.

021:010 And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.

021:011 And it was told David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.

021:012 And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabeshgilead, which had stolen them from the street of Bethshan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa:

021:013 And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.

021:014 And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. **And after that God was intreated for the land.**

It may sound terrible that this was done to the family of King Saul. But clearly we are not told the entire story. The killing of the Gibeonites is not even mentioned in bible passages about King Saul. It is only told to us during King David's reign. Did the family of King Saul benefit from the killing of the Gibeonites? Did they encourage it? Something else? We are not told. Repeat – we are not told the entire background of this story. We must trust that God had a reason.

Notice verse 14 that the famine ends.

Behind the Veil – Coronavirus and Other National/Global Disasters

Some disasters like Coronavirus and the Spanish Flu appear to be bad luck or bad planning by governments. But consider the following verses, especially the section which is highlighted.

Amos

- 003:001 Hear this word that the LORD hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying,
- 003:002 You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.
- 003:003 Can two walk together, except they be agreed?
- 003:004 Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?
- 003:005 Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him? shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all?
- 003:006 Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? **shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?**

Some newer translations use the word “disaster” instead of “evil” in verse 6 above.

In the above passages, several questions are raised with an implied answer of ‘no’. Now noticed the last question who’s answer is also ‘no’. This is not something that is up for debate. God is telling us in this passage that He takes responsibility for either causing or permitting disasters to occur. Earlier in this write up, there are 29 examples from the bible of God judging a city or a nation or the world and causing a disaster, either a flood or meteor strike or war. People believe what they want. But God clearly takes responsibility for these things, although people may not choose to believe it.

The reader is strongly encouraged to review the sections with titles starting with “Judgment Example”. Then notice the following passages

2 Peter

- 002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;
- 002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;
- 002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, **making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;**

Jude

- 001:005 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.
- 001:006 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.
- 001:007 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, **are set forth for an example,** suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Old Testament Examples

The following passage gives details on the destruction of these cities (Sodom and Gomorrah).

Genesis

- 019:024 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;
 019:025 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.
 019:026 But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.
 019:027 And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD:
 019:028 And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

So it appears that God used a meteor to destroy these cities.

So these stories are included in the bible for examples to us, that we can learn and avoid error.

The reader is also strongly encouraged to review the section entitled, "Overview - National Blessings For Obeying God And Curses For Not" which list out punishment God may send a nation which turns its back on Him and His ways.

So what is the remedy for a national or world disaster? Bible passages on that are also listed in the section entitled, "Overview - National Blessings For Obeying God And Curses For Not".

Leviticus

- 026:040 If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;
 026:041 And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:
 026:042 Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.
 026:043 The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.
 026:044 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.
 026:045 But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.
 026:046 These are the statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

Yes, these passages were meant for the Israelis. However, they have application to all nations. The story of Jonah is a good example of this.

Jonah

- 003:001 And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,
 003:002 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.
 003:003 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.
 003:004 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

- 003:005 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.
- 003:006 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.
- 003:007 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:
- 003:008 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.
- 003:009 Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?
- 003:010 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Please note that the word “repented” is not the best translation. The NIV translation uses the word “relented”.

So when a disaster over takes a nation, it needs to examine itself to see what great sin it has committed and repent and pray to God for mercy and forgiveness.

In the following verses, the prophet Amos relates a message from God to the nation of Israel declaring that the disasters which occurred were meant to bring that nation back to God. This illustrates why ‘natural’ disasters occur.

Amos

- 004:008 So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: **yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.**
- 004:009 I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them: **yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.**
- 004:010 I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: **yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.**
- 004:011 I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: **yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.**
- 004:012 Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.
- 004:013 For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The LORD, The God of hosts, is his name.
- 005:001 Hear ye this word which I take up against you, even a lamentation, O house of Israel.
- 005:002 The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land; there is none to raise her up.
- 005:003 For thus saith the Lord GOD; The city that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth by an hundred shall leave ten, to the house of Israel.
- 005:004 **For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live:**
-

The following is one of many which illustrates God’s judgment.

Amos

004:006 And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

004:007 And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.

004:008 So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

004:009 I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

004:010 I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

004:011 I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

Again and again God said He caused the punishments. Notice in verse 6, God said He cause hunger in the land and people did not return. In verses 7 and 8 He says He caused famine in some places and people did not return to Him. In verses 9 and 10 He says He caused mildew and pestulance. In verse 11 He said He overthrew some and they did not return. These are illustration of the principle described in Amos chapter 3 verse 6.

Again in the book of Haggai, God declares that He punishes nations thru natural means. The first set of verses below summarise the problems the nation experienced. This occurred after the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity. After they returned, they rebuilt their homes but not the temple.

Haggai

001:005 Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

001:006 Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.

In the following verses, God declares that He is responsible for the drought and is using it to punish them for their sin. The point is, God sometimes uses natural means to punish countries.

Haggai

001:007 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

001:008 Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.

001:009 Ye looked for much, and, lo it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.

001:010 Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit.

001:011 And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.

The following passage appears to describe God using an earthquake.

Micah

01:002 Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord GOD be witness against you, the LORD from his holy temple.

001:003 For, behold, the LORD cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth.

001:004 And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place.

001:005 For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?

001:006 Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof.

001:007 And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces, and all the hires thereof shall be burned with the fire, and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate: for she gathered it of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot.

Teaching From Revelation

There may be some who say, “that is what God did in the past, but does not do that today”. Or they state things happen according to laws of nature/science. They also may say that God set up the universe kind of like a clock – God created the gears, put the pieces together, winded up the clock, and set it down to run its course. But that is inconsistent with what the bible says. Notice the sections in this write up how God controls the weather and forces of nature, and how He can change them.

Notice what God says will happen during the Great Tribulation Period – that He will punish those who reject Him, and will use it to draw people to Him. Not everyone who enters that period will be saved. But many will be.

Revelation chapters 8 and list the first 6 judgments (or trumpets) when the seventh seal is opened during this period. Notice verses 20-21 which state that the people did not repent.

Revelation

009:013 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,
009:014 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

009:015 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

009:016 And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

009:017 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

009:018 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

009:019 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

009:020 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

009:021 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

Revelation chapter 16 lists the punishments which occur in 6 'bowls of wrath'. Notice that instead of people repenting after these scourges, they blaspheme God and continue in their sin – preferring sin even when it means pain. It makes one wonder about what they will think of hell verses heaven.

Revelation

016:008 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

016:009 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

016:010 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

016:011 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

016:012 And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

016:013 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

016:014 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

016:015 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

016:016 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

016:017 And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

016:018 And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, So, mighty an earthquake, and So, great.

016:019 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

016:020 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

016:021 And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

But this punishment is not punishment for the sake of punishment. Notice the following verses which state many will turn to God during this period.

Revelation

007:009 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

007:010 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

007:011 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

007:012 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

007:013 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

007:014 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Examples From Today

Is God judging the US, punishing the US, today? I am sure different people will have different opinions. Some things to consider are these:

- As of this writing (March 2021), over 540,000 Americans have died of the covid-19 virus.
- Over \$5 trillion was spent on relief from the covid-19 virus.
- The US spent \$6.4 trillion wars since Sept 11, 2001 (per Fox news article dated 3/10/2021).
- Over 50,000 US soldiers died in the Viet Nam War.
- It is estimated that the total US National Debt could reach \$30 trillion by the end of 2021. This is more than the \$21.6 trillion US GNP for 2019 (after which the GNP went down).

More items could be added to the list. But consider the loss of life. Consider what could have been done with the money if covid-19 never happened. Consider the costs of wars and the like. Consider how much better off the US could be if there were no covid-19 and no wars.

Behind the Veil – A Glimse Into The Spiritual World

There are not a lot of Bible passages which describe the “spiritual world”. But there are a few. Some say these passages suggest that Satan has more authority in the world that people realize. For example, in Daniel, who is this “prince of the kingdom of Persia”? And in Matthew, why did Satan tell Jesus he would give Him all the kingdoms of the world if He worshipped him? Did Satan promise something he had?

Note: These verses in Daniel are part of a visit of an angel to Daniel.

Daniel

010:012 Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

010:013 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

Daniel

010:020 Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.

Ephesians

006:011 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

006:012 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Matthew

004:008 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

004:009 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

004:010 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Behind the Veil - Kings and Presidents Lowest Of Men?

In the bible, God declares that He selects the rulers of nations, and He selects the basest of men. The NIV translation uses the word “lowliest” instead of “basest”. The basic thought is that God sets up rulers who are the basest of people in that place. So, if the morals of that place are high, the leaders will have higher morals. But if they are low, then they are low. Or, as some say, God gives nations the leaders which they deserve.

This is part of a dream or vision the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar received from God.

Daniel

004:017 This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

Daniel, the prophet confirms that this dream was from God and provides an interpretation.

Daniel

004:024 This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king:

004:025 That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

Notice what Daniel recommends in verse 27

Daniel

004:026 And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.

004:027 Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

Another interesting verse is in Hosea

Hosea

013:009 O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.

013:010 I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes?

013:011 I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.

You may remember that before Israel had kings, it had judges appointed by God. Then the Israelites wanted a king So, they would be like other nations. In effect, they were rebelling against God and God agreed to give them what they wanted, and agreed to give them Saul as a king, the one they wanted. And he was a bad king.

Behind the Veil - God Takes No Pleasure In Punishing People

People often imagine that God enjoys punishing people, enjoys seeing them in pain. But notice what the bible says.

Ezekiel

018:032 **For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD:** wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

Ezekiel

033:011 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, **I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked;** but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

So, God has no pleasure in punishing people. He does it to restrain evil. And He grieves over it. Notice what Jesus said and felt when He entered Jerusalem knowing its people rejected Him.

Luke

019:041 **And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,**

019:042 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

019:043 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

019:044 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

Introduction – Why Hell?

One question people sometimes ask is why does God punish nations and people. Why did God destroy all mankind except for Noah's family? Why did God destroy Sodom and Gomorrah and all their inhabitants except for Lot's family?

And why is there a hell? Why does God punish some for all eternity?

Some Things Are Not Revealed

The bible gives some insight into these questions. But even with that insight, we may not fully understand as God told the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah

055:008 **For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.**

055:009 **For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So, are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.**

This thought is expanded in the sections entitled, "Behind the Veil – Why Mysteries" and "Behind the Veil - The Bible is a Sealed/Incomprehensible Book To Some".

Unchecked Sin Causes World to Reject God

The following passage precedes the biblical story of the flood. In the bible, the term 'sons of God' refers to true believers. The term is used in many places. The term 'daughters of men' refers to non-believers. The passage illustrates that over time, generation after generation fell away from God.

Genesis

- 006:001 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,
- 006:002 **That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.**
- 006:003 **And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.**
- 006:004 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.
- 006:005 **And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**
- 006:006 **And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.**
- 006:007 **And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.**
- 006:008 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

And Jesus alludes to this in the following passage.

Luke

- 18:007 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?
- 018:008 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. **Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?**

The story of Lot and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah has many lessons. In the story, Lot, his wife and 2 daughters left Sodom before God destroyed the city. But notice the following passage from the New Testament.

2 Peter

- 002:007 **And delivered just Lot,** vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:
- 002:008 **(For that righteous man** dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

Notice the passage only says Lot was a righteous man. It says nothing about his family, implying they did not believe in God. The point is, living in a depraved society caused Lot to lose his family to all eternity. They chose the ways of the world rather than turning to God.

There is more about the story of Lot in the section entitled, "Behind the Veil - Story of Lot / Living in a Godless Society".

The point is, left unchecked, mankind gradually abandons God, and more and more evil, more narcissistic.

People Better Off Dead

The bible teaches those who reject God will go to a place of torment after they die. The punishment will depend on how those people live their life on earth. There will be more on this later. For many, it would be best if they die young rather than continue in sin, accumulating more punishment for their evil acts, or for one grievously evil act.

Matthew

018:002 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

018:003 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

018:004 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

018:005 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

018:006 **But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.**

018:007 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; **but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!**

018:008 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

018:009 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

2 Corinthians

005:010 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; **that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.**

Revelation

020:012 **And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.**

020:013 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

020:014 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

020:015 **And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.**

Notice in the above passage in Revelation, those who die without believing in Jesus are allowed to be judged by their works. But none is justified by them.

Why Hell

First, it may be good to remember what it is to be 'in' God's will. Jesus spoke the following parable.

John

015:001 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

015:002 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

015:003 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

015:004 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

015:005 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

015:006 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

So, Jesus liken it to us being branches and Jesus is the vine. If we are cut off from the vine, with are effectively dead.

So to are God's angels. Satan was once an angel. He rebelled against God and cut himself off.

Ezekiel

028:011 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

028:012 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

028:013 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

028:014 **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.**

028:015 **Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.**

028:016 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore **I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.**

028:017 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

028:018 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

028:019 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

Isaiah

014:012 **How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!**

014:013 **For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:**

014:014 **I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.**

014:015 **Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.**

014:016 **They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;**

014:017 **That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?**

014:018 All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house.

014:019 But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet.

014:020 Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.

014:021 **Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities.**

014:022 For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the LORD.

Sorry but we need to go off here on a little tangent... Notice verse 16-17 above which state Satan is to blame for the destruction of cities and turning the world into a wilderness. But now notice the following passage.

Amos

03:006 Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? **shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?**

So how can both be true? It is because God allows Satan to do certain things. Notice the following passage in Job.

Job

001:006 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

001:007 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

001:008 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

001:009 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

001:010 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

001:011 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

001:012 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So, Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Now, returning to the main topic, "Why Hell"...

Matthew

025:041 **Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:**

025:042 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

025:043 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

025:044 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

025:045 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

025:046 **And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.**

God decided that we should be eternal creatures – we have a beginning but no end. That is His will. It is also His will that He will be merciful to those He chooses. He is fair to all but He chooses to be merciful to those He selects.

To those who are lost, and go to hell, their punishment depends on how they live their lives as Jesus taught...

Luke

012:045 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

012:046 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

012:047 **And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.**

012:048 **But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.**

And would the people who are not 'in Jesus' like heaven? Remember, Revelation states after the Great Tribulation Period, Jesus returns, puts down the rebellion against God by removing the unsaved from the earth, and reigns for 1000 years on earth. During this time it is likely people continue to have children. Then...

Revelation

020:007 **And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,**

020:008 **And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.**

020:009 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

020:010 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

So here are some people, probably born during this 1000 year period, who rebel against Jesus's rule. If these people were not happy living under Jesus's rule on earth, would they be happy in heaven?

Even on earth, prisons and punishments are used to restrain evil.

Heaven is reserved for the righteous. So, where should the others go?

Children of the Devil

Not all people are the 'children of God'. The bible refers to people as 'children of the devil' if they are not saved. People who are born again believers are referred to as 'children of God'. Notice the following verses in which the bible refers to unbelievers as 'children of the devil'.

1 John

003:010 In this the children of God are manifest, and **the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.**

John

008:044 **Ye are of your father the devil,** and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

008:045 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

008:046 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

008:047 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

Matthew

013:038 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but **the tares are the children of the wicked one;**

Acts

013:008 But Elymas the sorcerer (for So, is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

013:009 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him.

013:010 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, **thou child of the devil**, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

John

001:012 But as many as received him, to them gave he power **to become the sons of God**, even to them that believe on his name:

001:013 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Destroyed Nations are an Example / Warning to Us Today

2 Peter

002:001 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

002:002 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

002:003 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, **making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;**

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

002:009 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

002:010 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

002:011 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

002:012 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

002:013 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;

- 002:014 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:
- 002:015 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;
- 002:016 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.
- 002:017 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.
- 002:018 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.
- 002:019 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.
- 002:020 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.
- 002:021 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.
- 002:022 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Some People Will Never Repent Even Knowing What Awaits Them

People have a free will. They are free to repent and turn to God, or remain as they are.

Proverbs

016:009 A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

The following passages talk about some of the plagues/punishments to come in the days of the Great Tribulation Period. Their refusal to repent implies the punishment was meant to cause them to repent. And actually, many did. But many also chose not to.

Revelation

- 009:001 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.
- 009:002 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.
- 009:003 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.
- 009:004 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.
- 009:005 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.
- 009:006 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.
- 009:007 And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.
- 009:008 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

- 009:009 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.
- 009:010 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.
- 009:011 And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.
- 009:012 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.
- 009:013 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,
- 009:014 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.
- 009:015 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.
- 009:016 And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.
- 009:017 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.
- 009:018 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.
- 009:019 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.
- 009:020 **And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:**
- 009:021 **Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts**

Revelation

- 016:008 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.
- 016:009 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: **and they repented not to give him glory.**
- 016:010 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,
- 016:011 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, **and repented not of their deeds.**

This writer has met people like this. The ones I met know the bible – or at least parts of it. They mock God as being cruel. They have no desire to seek or understand God, even though they knowg the prophecies of hell. This writer is not saying all people who reject God are like this. But there are some.

Why don't people repent (not just the people this writer met)?

John

- 003:017 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.
- 003:018 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
- 003:019 **And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**

003:020 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.
 003:021 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

And they do not want to follow this instruction

Deuteronomy

004:029 **But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.**

But why do some repent and others do not?

John

015:016 Ye have not chosen me, but I **have chosen you**, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

So God has chosen some to work in them repentance and turning to Him. Why only some?

Romans

009:014 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

009:015 **For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.**

009:016 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

009:017 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

009:018 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

009:019 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

009:020 **Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?**

009:021 **Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?**

009:022 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

009:023 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

009:024 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

God is not unfair. We all are born cut off (not in) from Him. He decides to be merciful to some, by bringing them to faith and repentance. But it is a choice. The invitation goes out to all. But not all accept. Why? Jesus explains in the following parable.

Luke

014:015 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

014:016 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

014:017 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

- 014:018 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.
- 014:019 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.
- 014:020 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.
- 014:021 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.
- 014:022 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.
- 014:023 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.
- 014:024 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

Another illustration is in Jesus's parable of the sower.

Matthew

- 013:003 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;
- 013:004 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:
- 013:005 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:
- 013:006 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.
- 013:007 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:
- 013:008 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.
- 013:009 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

It continues

Matthew

- 013:018 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.
- 013:019 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.
- 013:020 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;
- 013:021 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.
- 013:022 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.
- 013:023 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

People are invited to come to God. But not all want to. They have no desire for God. Or they let themselves be turned away by false doctrine, sinful lusts, or tribulation, never having the Gospel 'take root in them'. It is their choice. But the invitation is for all.

Revelation

- 003:020 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.**

Matthew

011:028 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

011:029 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

011:030 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Once again, it is a choice.

Hebrews

011:023 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

011:024 **By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;**

011:025 **Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;**

011:026 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Behind the Veil – The Bible is a Sealed/Incomprehensible Book To Some

The Bible Is A Closed Book To Some

When studying the Bible, two things are needed. First is having a heart that desires God. The second is to be open to accept what the Bible teaches. There are many people who like to follow the rituals of the church without having any real desire for God. And there are many people who believe what they want to believe and try to understand the Bible bases on what they want to believe. The Bible warns against this.

In the following passage, God warns us that without a desire for Him, the Bible is not understood.

Isaiah

029:010 For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

029:011 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed:

029:012 And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

029:013 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

The other problem is that people often believe what they want to believe. For example, some people refuse to believe there is a hell. So, long as people believe what they want to believe, they will be blind to what the Bible teaches. In the following passage, God says that in 'that day' (which is the Great Tribulation period), there will be those who are spiritually deaf and blind will hear the words of the Bible and understand.

Isaiah

029:018 And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

So what is the solution? How can the veil be taken away?

2 Corinthians

003:014 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ.

003:015 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.

003:016 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

We Need The Holy Spirit To Understand The Bible

So how can a Christian understand the bible?

1 Corinthians

002:001 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

002:002 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

002:003 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

- 002:004 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:
- 002:005 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.
- 002:006 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:
- 002:007 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:
- 002:008 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
- 002:009 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
- 002:010 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.
- 002:011 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even So, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.
- 002:012 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.
- 002:013 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
- 002:014 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
- 002:015 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.
- 002:016 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

John

- 016:007 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.
- 016:008 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
- 016:009 Of sin, because they believe not on me;
- 016:010 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;
- 016:011 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.
- 016:012 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.
- 016:013 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Example of Holy Spirit Opening One's Understanding

The following passages gives 2 examples of God 'opening the eyes' (giving understanding) of the scriptures to Jesus's disciples. Both passages are stories of Jesus appearing after His resurrection. The first story is of Jesus appearing to two disciples who were walking to the village of Emmaus.

Luke

- 024:013 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.
- 024:014 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

- 024:015 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.
- 024:016 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.
- 024:017 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?
- 024:018 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?
- 024:019 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, ¶ Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:
- 024:020 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.
- 024:021 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.
- 024:022 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;
- 024:023 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.
- 024:024 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so, as the women had said: but him they saw not.
- 024:025 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:
- 024:026 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?
- 024:027 **And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.**
- 024:028 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.
- 024:029 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.
- 024:030 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.
- 024:031 **And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.**
- 024:032 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

Notice in the above, they did not believe Jesus had risen from the dead, and so, they did not recognize Him as they walked along. Even after Jesus explained all the scriptures/prophecies regarding Himself, they did not recognize Him. It was not until later when 'their eyes were opened, and they knew him', implying it was God that opened their eyes. They had knowledge of the scriptures but did not recognize Him until later.

The following may be a better example.

Luke

- 024:033 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,
- 024:034 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.
- 024:035 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.
- 024:036 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.
- 024:037 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.
- 024:038 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

024:039 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

024:040 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.

024:041 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

024:042 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.

024:043 And he took it, and did eat before them.

024:044 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

024:045 **Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,**

Here, the bible explicitly states that God opened the disciples understanding to the scriptures. People may know the scriptures, but it is God who opens our understanding to them.

God Sends Delusion To Those Who Turn Their Backs To Him

The following is part of a passage that references the anti-christ during the Great Tribulation Period which is still to come. However, this writer believes the principle laid out in verses 11-12 is also true today and has been for the past 2000 years. Remember the false religions which came about in the last 2000 years? And all the people who believe science has all the answers?

2 Thessalonians

002:008 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

002:009 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

002:010 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

002:011 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

002:012 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Now God does not tempt people as the bible states

001:013 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

001:014 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

001:015 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

But God does allow certain things to happen, and that may include Satan's temptations. There is a passage in Job which makes it clear that sometimes God allows 'bad' things to happen.

Job

001:009 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

001:010 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

001:011 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

001:012 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So, Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Behind the Veil - How God Punishes Countries

There are many Bible verses which state God punishes countries. But how does He do it? There are interesting passages in Job and Isaiah that give insight into this.

Notice that in Job, God kept, as it were, a hedge around Job. Satan was not allowed to attack Job until God allowed it.

Job

001:009 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

001:010 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

001:011 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

001:012 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So, Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Notice in Isaiah chapter 14 verses 16 and 17, Satan is the one who caused destruction.

Isaiah

014:012 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

014:013 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

014:014 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

014:015 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

014:016 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;

014:017 That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?

So God may remove protection and allow temptation.

Behind the Veil – Peace

The following passage states an important principle – that there is no peace for the wicked. This is true for both individuals and countries. The fact that it is stated twice in the bible indicates its importance. When the bible states something once, it is important. When the bible states something more than once, it adds to its importance.

Isaiah

048:022 There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

Isaiah

057:020 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

057:021 There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

The following passage is an example how God gave peace to the nation of Judah during king Jehoshaphat reign. Notice that it states God gave peace to the nation of Judah because it and its king sought God.

2 Chronicles

020:030 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.

020:031 And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah: he was thirty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

020:032 And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the LORD.

The next passage is an example of the flip side of the coin. Jehoram was an evil king who did not care about God. Notice verse 10 which states that God took away peace because of his and the nations turned their backs on God.

2 Chronicles

021:008 In his days the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king.

021:009 Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots.

021:010 So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time also did Libnah revolt from under his hand; because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers.

The following passages bring more insight on the issue of peace. Some verses regarding other blessings and curses were removed to keep it brief. The complete passage was covered in an earlier section of blessings and curses.

Deut

028:001 And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

028:007 The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

Deut

028:015 But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

028:025 The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.

The point is, God gives peace and/or victory to nations who seek Him.

Behind The Veil - God Rules In His Providence

The book of Ester in the bible teaches an important principle of government, that God rules, and is in control.

The book of Ester in the bible is a story of how God intervenes in the lives of His children (those who believe in Him) even when they are not living according to His perfect will. Prior to this story, the Persians had conquered Judea and had taken the Jews north into Persia. After 70 years, they were allowed to return to Palestine, which is where God intended them to be. But some Jews remained in Persia. So, that was the situation at the start of Ester's story. In summary, a beauty contest was started in Persia for its king to select a new queen. Thru very fortuitous circumstances, Ester, a Jew, was selected to be queen. The king greatly loved her. But he did not know she was a Jew. Another person in the royal court got the king to sign an unrevokable order to have all Jews killed. But when Ester revealed that she was a Jew, the king issued another order stating anyone killing a Jew would be put to death, thus sparing the lives of all Jews in Persia. God is not mentioned at all in this book/story. But it is an example how God rules in His providence. Fortuitous circumstances? No. It was God's design to protect the Jews in Persia.

The story starts with when it occurred.

Ester

001:001 Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus, (this is Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:)

001:002 That in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the palace,

001:003 In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him:

The term "Ahasuerus" was actually a title for King Xerxes of Persia. Newer translations of the bible have the name Xerxes instead of "Ahasuerus". So, the story begins in the third year of his reign. He had a large banquet and ordered his wife to appear. But she refused.

Ester

001:010 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

001:011 To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on.

001:012 But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

So in his anger, he rejected his queen.

Ester

001:019 If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered, That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she.

001:020 And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire, (for it is great,) all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small.

001:021 And the saying pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan:

Later, the king missed her and his advisors suggested he choose a new queen.

Esther

002:001 After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.

002:002 Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king:

Esther

002:004 And let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

The king chose Esther not knowing she was a Jew.

Esther

002:017 And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; So, that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Esther

002:020 Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

A relative of Esther called Mordecai learned of a plot to kill the king, reported it to Esther who, in turn reported it to the king, saving the king's life.

Esther

002:021 In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hands on the king Ahasuerus.

002:022 And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name.

002:023 And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

The king promoted a man called Haman and ordered all to pay him honor. But ...

Esther

003:005 And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

003:006 And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

So Haman hatched a plot and convinced the king to have all the Jews killed.

Esther

003:008 And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

003:009 If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries.

- 003:010 And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.
- 003:011 And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.
- 003:012 Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.
- 003:013 And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.

Mordecai urged Esther to act.

Esther

- 04:012 And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.
- 004:013 Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.
- 004:014 For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

So Esther arranges a banquet with Haman as the only guest. Then comes the downfall of Haman.

Esther

- 007:001 So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.
- 007:002 And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom.
- 007:003 Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request:
- 007:004 For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.
- 007:005 Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?
- 007:006 And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.
- 007:007 And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.
- 007:008 Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As the word went out of king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.
- 007:009 And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon.

007:010 So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

And the king issues an edit to protect the Jews.

Esther

008:011 Wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey,

008:012 Upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar.

008:013 The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

There is more to the story and it is good to read the entire book of Esther. The main point of the story is that God guiding the affairs of people to accomplish His will. No, Haman's acts were not in God's will. But God set up conditions to protect the Jews from the evil meant to destroy them. That is the theme of the book - God often rules by providence. No prophets were mentioned. No revelation from God was mentioned. But noticed that God ensured Esther was in the right place at the right time. There are other biblical stories with a similar message such as the story of Joseph. And the childhood story of Moses. And there are more too.

Behind the Veil - You Shall Reap What You Sow

A common phrase is 'what goes around comes around'. Actually, the Bible does teach that. Although is used when talking about people, it is true of nations also.

Isaiah

033:001 Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.

Jeremiah

017:009 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

017:010 I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Galatians

006:007 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Some may believe the above passages only refer to what individuals do. But the following passage, given to the nation of Edom 2500+ years ago, makes it clear this principle applies to nations also.

Obadiah

001:015 For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.

Behind the Veil - Liberals & Conservatives

Isaiah

032:005 The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful.

032:006 For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.

032:007 The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right.

032:008 But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand.

The word 'churl' means or rude or boorish person, or a miser.

The above Bible passage is in a section of the Bible which talks about the future Great Tribulation period. Notice that at that time, there will be an end of hypocrisy.

Behind the Veil - Danger of Lack Of Knowledge

Another criticism of God is in the verse below. The problem was His people had no knowledge. They may have had religious observances or habits but they really had no knowledge or understanding of Him. This led to sin..

Hosea

004:001 Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.

Once again, what caused this situation? They forgot God's law and they lacked knowledge of God.

Hosea

004:006 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

Hosea

006:006 For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

The next verse tells us that God gave them His word or law. But they did not study it – it was a strange thing, they lacked God's word.

Hosea

008:012 I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing.

So what was the result? Israel had a form of religion. They continued with the sacrifices of God's law. But they had forgotten God and had no real knowledge of Him. Therefore God was going to judge the nation.

Hosea

008:013 They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it; but the LORD accepteth them not; now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: they shall return to Egypt.

008:014 For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof.

Another result of Israel's lack of knowledge of God was they went into idolatry. Notice in the next verse God accuses them of 'whoring'. That is an expression that they went after other gods. The last phrase in this verse refers to their love of profit.

Hosea

009:001 Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as other people: for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, thou hast loved a reward upon every cornfloor.

In many ways this sounds like the US. Not all people who call themselves 'christian' really are that. They go to church as a ritual and acknowledge that the Bible is God's word. But they do not read or study the Bible – they have little knowledge what it teaches. They may go to church that teach humanism rather than Biblical teaching. Or the church only teaches from a tiny portion of the Bible.. And the lives of these people reflect this. They live as they please without regard to Biblical teaching. They advocate political policies that conflict with Biblical teaching because they have no knowledge of it or do not care. Most people who call themselves 'christian' really are not.

Behind the Veil – Idolatry

Most references to idolatry in the bible refer to the worship of physical idols made of stone or wood or gold. But the bible sometimes uses the term 'idol' or 'idolatry' to refer to human desires or passions which are not aligned to God's will as mentioned in the following bible verse.

Colossians

003:005 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Behind the Veil - Religion And Yet Far From God

There were times when Israel followed religious ceremonies and yet were far from God. The following is an example. Verse 2 below states that Israel liked religious ceremonies. And verse 3 states they fasted as a religious ceremony.

Isaiah

058:001 Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

058:002 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

058:003 Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

But the problem was, Israel enjoyed the religious ceremonies but their hearts were far from God. They did not want to do God's will in their lives. In verses 6-7, God said He prefers that people care for each other more than doing religious ceremonies. In these verses, God is saying He wants people to help each other with their burdens or problems, give help to the poor and hungry, and don't turn your back on your relatives who have problems.

Isaiah

058:006 Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

058:007 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Once again, one may want to read these passages using a newer translation of the bible such as the NIV.

Behind the Veil - Why Some Die Young

There is no one reason why some people die young. And the bible only gives a few examples where God gives us a reason a person died young. So, let's look at what the bible does say.

To Spare Them

Some die young So, they will not suffer in the judgment to come.

Isaiah

057:001 The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.

So according to this passage, sometimes a person will die young, 'before their time', to avoid a coming tragedy.

To Stop Them Committing A Grave Sin

There is a lesson which can be learned from the reign of king Hezekiah. King Hezekiah was one of the best kings of Judah. However, his sin eventually led to a downfall of his kingdom after his death. The problem did not occur when other countries threatened him. The problem occurred when one kingdom flattered him.

In the following story, the Bible records how King Hezekiah received a letter from King Sennacherib of Assyria which demanded his surrender. King Hezekiah prayed and God delivered him.

Notice King Hezekiah became very ill and was told he would die. He prayed, asking God to spare him. God responded saying He would allow the king to live longer.

2 Kings

020:001 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.

020:002 Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,

020:003 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.

020:004 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying,

020:005 Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.

020:006 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

So, what happened afterwards? What happened in the last 15 years of King Hezekiah's life? The book of Kings explains.

2 Kings

020:012 At that time Berodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.

- 020:013 And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.
- 020:014 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon.
- 020:015 And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.
- 020:016 And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD.
- 020:017 Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD.
- 020:018 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.
- 020:019 Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?

Notice that Hezekiah's pride proved to be the downfall. He did not ask God how to receive the Ambassadors from Babylon because they can as 'friends'. It is possible that the kingdom would be attacked and defeated by Babylon for other sins. However, revealing the treasure to the Babylonians probably was encouragement for them to attack. And if the Babylonians had conquered them without knowing about the treasury, perhaps they would never have learned of it or taken it.

But there is still more to this story. King Manasseh was the son of king Hezekiah. (Notice that God extended King Hezekiah's life 15 years and his son began reigning when he was 12. So, Manasseh was born 3 years after God extended King Hezekiah's life) He was born after God agreed to extend King Hezekiah's life. Now, King Hezekiah was one of the best kings (godly kings) of Judah. But Manasseh was the worst as recorded below.

2 Chronicles

- 033:001 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem:
- 033:002 But did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.
- 033:003 For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.
- 033:004 Also he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever.
- 033:005 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.
- 033:006 And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

So, because King Hezekiah's life was extended 15 years

- The Babylonians learned of the great wealth of the nation, which later encouraged them to invade
- King Hezekiah sired the worst king the nation of Judah ever had

Sin Unto Death

1 John

005:016 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

005:017 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

There are sins which will result in physical death. For example, there have been stories of murderers who become born again believers in jail while awaiting their death sentence to be completed. These people became saved Christians. But that did not save them from the death sentence. And there are examples from the bible.

The following passage records how one of the malefactors repented. But Jesus did not spare him from the cross. However, Jesus did tell him he was forgiven and would go to paradise.

Luke

023:039 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

023:040 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

023:041 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

023:042 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

023:043 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

In the next passage, Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit. For this sin, they died immediately. Notice the passage does not say they lost their salvation. But they were removed from this world.

Acts

005:001 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

005:002 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

005:003 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

005:004 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

005:005 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

005:006 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

005:007 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

005:008 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for So, much? And she said, Yea, for So, much.

005:009 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

005:010 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

005:011 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

Dr. McGee told a story of a mother who's son kept misbehaving. She warned him over and over again to play nicely outside with the neighbor's son. But every time she looked outside the window, her son was fighting the neighbor's son. Finally, she called him back home, into the house So, he no longer could misbehave. So, in a similar manor, God sometimes calls His children back home to heaven at an early age because they are causing too many problems.

But why are some called home and not others? In the following passage, Jesus gives some insight.

Luke

- 013:001 There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.
- 013:002 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?
- 013:003 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.
- 013:004 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?
- 013:005 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.
- 013:006 He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.
- 013:007 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?
- 013:008 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:
- 013:009 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

Notice that in the above passage, Jesus makes two important points. One is, when we see God's punishment of others, we should take note and repent because we are no better. The second is in verse 6-9. Christians are to produce 'fruit', that is, good works. If we fail to do this, God will remove us from the place of fruit bearing, or, in other words, He will remove us from the earth for not producing good works.

And there are other sins which cause many to die before their time. Some are gluttony, alcoholism, and the like. In such cases, God does not have to take direct action. The strain on a person's body for abusing it will shorten one's life.

1 Corinthians

- 003:016 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?
- 003:017 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Another example is

1 Corinthians

- 005:001 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not So, much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.
- 005:002 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.
- 005:003 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath So, done this deed,
- 005:004 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- 005:005 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

No Longer Bearing Fruit

Jesus sometimes spoke of people bearing fruit, as in the following passage. In it, 'fruit' refers to good deeds or good works, especially in regards to building up and expanding the church, believes in Jesus.

John

015:001 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

015:002 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

015:003 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

015:004 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

015:005 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

So, what exactly are these fruits? They can be things like giving money to the church or to the poor. It can be witnessing for Christ. It can be visiting the sick. It can even be raising children in a godly environment and teaching them about Jesus. Or it can simply be leading a godly life in which people will say, "what a nice person" because that can bring glory to God (just as a good child brings praise to its parents).

Colosians

001:010 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Now notice the following passage.

Luke

013:006 He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

013:007 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

013:008 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:

013:009 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

If a Christian stops producing good fruit in their life, God will try to cultivate it more. If the Christian still produces no good fruit, God may remove them from this earthly life.

Judgement on a Nation or People

Sometimes God judges a nation or people and the consequences may be devastating. In the examples below, men, women, children, and even infants presumably died. And additional examples could be listed.

2 Peter

002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

Glorify God

Sometimes 'bad' things can happen to people So, that in the end, God is glorified and people turn to Him.

John

011:001 Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

011:002 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

011:003 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

011:004 **When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.**

011:005 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

011:006 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

011:007 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.

011:008 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

011:009 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

011:010 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

011:011 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

011:012 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

011:013 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

011:014 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

011:015 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

011:016 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

011:017 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

011:018 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

011:019 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

011:020 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house.

011:021 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

011:022 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

011:023 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

011:024 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

011:025 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

011:026 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

011:027 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

011:028 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

011:029 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

011:030 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

011:031 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

011:032 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

- 011:033 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.
- 011:034 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.
- 011:035 Jesus wept.
- 011:036 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!
- 011:037 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?
- 011:038 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.
- 011:039 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.
- 011:040 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?
- 011:041 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.
- 011:042 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.
- 011:043 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.
- 011:044 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.
- 011:045 **Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.**

Desire to Die

Elijah was a great prophet of God in Israel at a time when its king and most of the country worshipped idols. Elijah did many great things but became discouraged and asked that he could die.

1 Kings

- 019:004 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

There is more to this story in 1 Kings and the beginning of 2 Kings. But in brief, God instructed Elijah to appoint Elisha as his successor as prophet. Then Elijah went to heaven.

So sometimes God takes a person thru death when they no longer desire to live.

It's A Mystery

This section gave several examples of why some people die 'young' or 'before their time'. However, this writer believes there are other reasons too. We may guess why someone died young. But we may never know, in this life, why it happens to particular people.

Behind the Veil – Strange Laws In The Land Of Israel

Yes, some of the laws God gave to the nation of Israel seem very strange. God gave specific laws to the nation of Israel 3000+ years ago. But many of these are not relevant for today. God had a special mission for Israel back then.

Israel – Witness to the World

They were to be a godly nation that would draw others to the one true God as indicated in the following.

1 Kings

008:041 Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;

008:042 (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house;

008:043 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.

1 Kings

10:024 And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.

One example in the Bible is the story of the queen of Sheba.

2 Chron

009:001 And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

009:002 And Solomon told her all her questions: and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.

009:003 And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built,

009:004 And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his cupbearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her.

009:005 And she said to the king, It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom:

009:006 Howbeit I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: for thou exceedest the fame that I heard.

009:007 Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.

009:008 Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.

Chron

009:022 And king Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

009:023 And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart.

Psalms

068:028 Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

068:029 Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee.

Israel Rituals – Fore Shadowing the Coming Savior

And many of their laws were symbols of the coming of the Messiah. For example, the book of Exodus stated people could become bond servants for up to 7 years. It reads

Exodus

021:002 If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.

021:003 If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.

021:004 If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.

021:005 And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free:

021:006 Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.

Notice the strange law which states the man could have a hole bore thru his ear. This was done if the man wanted to stay with his family. Why?

Psalm 40 talks of the coming Messiah or Savior. Notice the following verse

Psalms

040:006 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

Here again, it speaks of making a hole in one's ear. What is the explanation? Some insight is in the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews

010:005 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

010:006 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

This is a rephrase of Psalm 40. Notice that instead of stating 'mine ears thou hast opened', it states 'but a body hast thou prepared me'. This refers to the coming of Jesus in human form to redeem His people and His crucifixion.

So this law is a foreshadow of things to come.

So some laws God gave to Israel are not meant for us (gentiles or non-Jews) today.

Historical Record

Part of the Bible is historical record and God did not approve of what people were doing.

Behind the Veil - Are We on God's Side? Is God on Our Side?

There is a danger that people presume God is on their side. One cannot force God to be on their side. The following stories illustrate the point.

In this story, the leaders of Israel decided to bring the Arc of the Covenant into battle to get God's help. But notice that they did not ask for God's direction or help. They presumed that if they took it, God would help them.

1 Sam

004:003 And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to day before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.

004:004 So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

004:005 And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, So, that the earth rang again

Notice the result:

1 Sam

004:010 And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.

004:011 And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

Notice what God did to the Philistines and their god

1 Sam

005:001 And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod.

005:002 When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon.

005:003 And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.

005:004 And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him.

Now after God destroyed the statue of the Philistine god and brought a plague to them, did they turn to Him? No. Instead they tried to get rid of the Arc. Notice the following.

1 Sam

005:006 But the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with emerods, even Ashdod and the coasts thereof.

005:007 And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.

005:008 They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about thither.

But what happened? They sent it to another of their cities and they got the plague. Then they sent it to another who did not want it.

1 Sam

005:009 And it was so, that, after they had carried it about, the hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts.

005:010 Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people.

Eventually, it was returned to Israel. But the Philistines did not turn to God.

Notice why God let the Philistines to prevail over Israel:

1 Sam

007:003 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

007:004 Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.

Then

1 Sam

007:010 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.

007:011 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Bethcar

Another good example is from the book of Numbers, chapter 14. After 40 years of wandering in the Wilderness, Israel is ready to enter the Promised Land. They decided to attack the Amalekites and Canaanites. They presumed God would be with them in this battle. But notice what happened.

Num

014:041 And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall not prosper.

014:042 Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies.

014:043 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you.

014:044 But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp.

014:045 Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.

Behind the Veil - God Motivates People/Leaders

There are several Bible passages indicating God motivates leaders.

Proverbs

021:001 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Some of the best known are those in Deuteronomy which state that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh. By 'harden', the I believe the Bible means God forced the Pharaoh to make a decision. There are many things in life for which people delay making decisions. But once they are forced into a decision, they often will stand firm that it was the correct course of action.

Deuteronomy

004:021 And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.

Judah had been conquered and taken into captivity. Years later, God motivated King Cyrus to let them go home.

Another example is from the book of Ezra in the Bible. In it, it states that God motivated king Cyrus.

Ezra

001:001 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

001:002 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Ezra

007:027 Blessed be the LORD God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem:

007:028 And hath extended mercy unto me before the king, and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened as the hand of the LORD my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me

Behind the Veil – God Does Not Change

Some people argue that God changes His mind about morality. However, that is not true.

Malichi

003:006 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Numbers

023:019 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

Some people claim there are inconsistencies in the Bible. That is not true either. This write up is not written for that topic. To get a better understanding of this, it is important to study the entire Bible. It is helpful to have a good teacher to help understand the passages and to learn how to read the Bible.

Behind the Veil – The Real Problem of Nations

Hebrews

011:006 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

So it comes down to this – Do people believe in God and seek Him and do His will? Yes, there are billions of people who believe in a god. That is not the issue. See the section entitle “Issues – Acceptance verse Tolerance and Discrimination”.

Behind the Veil – Maybe Why Some Christians Ignore Biblical Teaching

Why do some politicians who claim to be Christian, support policies which are contrary to biblical principles?

Difference Interpretation Of Bible Passages

Of course, there are different opinions among Christians about how verses are to be interpreted. Two people may read the same passage and have different understandings. That does not mean there are 2 valid meanings to the passage. But it does mean 2 different well meaning, born again Christians may read a passage differently and one could be incorrect. And there are other reasons too.

Lack of Biblical Knowledge

Many Christians do not study the bible. The next question is, why? Are they really Christian?

Hosea

004:006 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

Not A True Christian

Another reason is that some who say/think they are Christian, are not born-again Christians. They have no leading of the Holy Spirit. They do not 'hear' the Savior's voice, as Jesus said,

John

010:025 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

010:026 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

010:027 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

010:028 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Matthew

007:015 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

007:016 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

007:017 Even So, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

007:018 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

007:019 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

007:020 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

007:021 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

007:022 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

007:023 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Titus

001:015 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

001:016 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

1 Timothy

004:001 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

004:002 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

So not everyone who says or think they are a Christian is a true born-again Christian. That is why we are told,

2 Corinthians

013:005 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

The word 'reprobate' refers to someone who has failed the test.

Immature Christians

There are, however, other reasons why some Christians reject biblical principles. One of those reasons is because they never grow up spiritually. That is, they only study (or are taught by preachers) verses like John 3:16 – which is called the 'Gospel in a Nutshell'. Yes, learning about God's love and salvation is vital. But there is more to God's teaching than just that. There are 66 books in the bible. Yet many Christians only know part of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus plus a few Old Testament stories – just a tiny fraction of the bible. The Apostle Paul in the gospel of Hebrews compares these people to infants who can only handle milk – the basics of the gospel. They have never grown or matured to study and learn the rest of the bible – the meat – as mentioned in the passage below.

Hebrews

005:011 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

005:012 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

005:013 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

005:014 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

1 Corinthians

003:001 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

003:002 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

003:003 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

And what can this lead to?

Hosea

004:006 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

So when bible passages are presented on which a policy can be based, they reject them, not having grown enough to understand. But there are other reasons why some reject biblical teaching used to support a policy.

Prodigal Sons

The following passage has references to 'prodigal sons' – that is, true born-again Christians who got into a very sinful life style.

Hebrews

006:001 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

006:002 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

006:003 And this will we do, if God permit.

006:004 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

006:005 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

006:006 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

006:007 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

006:008 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

I relied greatly on Dr. J. Vernon McGee's bible commentaries to understand the above passage. Some of the following are my additional thoughts...

Remember that the bible does not contradict itself. So, the correct interpretation is the one that is in harmony (does not contradict) other bible passages.

So let's start with verses 4-6 because these are the verses that most trouble people. Notice that these verses are a clear reference to some true, born-again Christians who have 'fallen away'. These are Christians who, like the prodigal son, have given themselves over to a life of sin, turning their backs on God and not paying attention to His leading. And why is this passage so scary? Because it says, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened ... to renew them again unto repentance". Notice it says "repentance" and not "salvation". Why is this an important distinction? Because a person can commit sins without repenting and still be saved. There are many, many born again Christians who have become 'prodigal sons', repented, and came back to a full relationship to God. But there are others who never have been restored to a full relationship with God, even though they are saved.

Now look at verse 7 and 8. Are they referring to the fires of hell? No. These verses are referring to the reward that Christians may receive in heaven for how they live their lives on earth. So, verse 8 above is referring to one's works which may be burned. The following passage in 1 Corinthians gives more insight, especially verse 15.

1 Corinthians

003:008 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

003:009 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

003:010 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

003:011 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

003:012 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

003:013 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

003:014 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

003:015 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so, as by fire.

When a true Christian turns their back on God and gets into a sinful life style, they can lose the reward they had built up. And they could lose that closeness to God they had in the past, while they are still on earth. And it may not be possible for them to ever be in a place where they could do anything good for God again. For example, they have been Christian ministers or preachers who got into a sinful life, maybe thru adultery or getting caught up in some other sinful life style. At this point, their witness for God can be ineffective because who would believe someone who live contrary to their teaching? Yet they have not lost their salvation. They will enter heaven but without a reward – like a person who lost everything in a fire.

And so, these prodigal sons may be effectively blind to what the bible teaches on various topics. They may not even want to study the bible.

Behind the Veil - Divided Country / Unified Country

Overview

In the US, there is a lot of talk about certain political candidates being able to unify the country. This is especially true among liberals who accuse conservatives for dividing the country. They have accused conservatives for dividing the country between those with conservative and liberal policies and they want politicians who will unite people behind one set of policies.

There are actually two areas in which a person can be conservative/liberal. One area is in finance or money matters. The other is in social or religious/morality laws.

This section discusses the religious/moral divide in the country.

Jesus's Warning Of Persecution

Jesus warned that the world would persecute His followers.

John

015:018 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

015:019 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

015:020 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

015:021

But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, ☐ because they know not him that sent me.

015:022 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

Matthew

010:024 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

010:025 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

We see conflicts between the interests of Christians and non-Christians in the country today. Some of these are persecutions. They include,

Governments demand Christian photographers and bakers to provide services for gay weddings even though they go against their beliefs.

Governments demand Christian charities which provide adoption services must service the desire of gay couples even though it is against their beliefs.

2016 presidential candidate Hilary Clinton called supporters, many of whom were born-again Christians, of Donald Trump, 'the deplorables'.

The list could go on.

The cause of this divide is because Christians want policies to be aligned with biblical teaching. Non-Christians oppose this and want to be free of the morality taught in the bible.

This book has been devoted to biblical teaching on what governmental and citizenship responsibilities are. These conflict with what non-Christians want.

Jesus Did Not Teach Unity

The bible teaches Christians should live in peace as much as possible

Romans

012:018 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

But Jesus did not teach in unity.

Matthew

010:034 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

It is probably best to look at the above bible passage in its entire context.

Matthew

010:024 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

010:025 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

010:026 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

010:027 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

010:028 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

010:029 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

010:030 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

010:031 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

010:032 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

010:033 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

010:034 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

010:035 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

010:036 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

010:037 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

010:038 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

010:039 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

010:040 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

010:041 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

010:042 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

Verses 24-25 warn of hatred against Jesus's followers.

Verses 26-33 are words of comfort to those who remain faithful to Jesus.

Verses 34-39 are warnings that conflicts may occur within families when some turn to Jesus and others do not. The most obvious examples of this today are in some parts of the world where family members can be persecuted or even killed if they become a Christian. There are also people who love their parents so much that they do not want to learn of Jesus, because that is not what their parents want. And we see it in Christian families where some members reject Christianity. The point is, we need to be faithful to Jesus regardless of the consequences.

Verses 40-42 refer to a future period called the Great Tribulation when true Christians will be hunted down by governments and any people who help Christians will be hunted down.

The point is, it is better to stay true to God than be united in sin.

2 John

001:006 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

001:007 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

001:008 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

001:009 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

001:010 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

001:011 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Verse 8 is a warning that a person could lose their reward (not salvation) in heaven if they become a, "partaker of his evil deeds".

Warning – All Politicians Who Claim to be Christians Are

People who really are God's children do what God wants.

Luke

008:020 And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

008:021 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

James

002:017 Even So, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

002:018 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

002:019 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

Many additional passages could be mentioned. Yes, it is true that Christians may fall into a sinful lifestyle like the prodigal son. But like the prodigal son, they eventually will leave that lifestyle.

Behind the Veil - Danger of Evil Rulers

When we think of bad rulers, we usually think of ones like Hitler which started World War 2. Or we think of incompetent presidents or prime ministers. But when the bible speaks of bad rulers, they are often those which cause a country to sin. More specifically, they are rulers which cause their people to fall into sin and fall away from God. We see this in history. In the late 1700's, Maximilien Robespierre was a key figure in the French Revolution. He tried to set up a new religion for the French people and do away with Christianity. There have been leaders like the ones in North Korea who want the people to worship them. And there are examples in the bible of kings which were condemned by God for doing this. Some examples are as follows.

Notice how in each case, the king is blamed. The counties of Israel and Judah were punished and fell when their sins became too great. That is covered in other sections of this write-up.

1 Kings

012:019 So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

012:020 And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

1 Kings

012:026 And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David:

012:027 If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.

012:028 Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

012:029 And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan.

012:030 And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.

1 Kings

014:006 And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings.

014:007 Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel,

014:008 And rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee: and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes;

014:009 But hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back:

014:010 Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone.

014:011 Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken it.

014:012 Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die.

014:013 And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.

014:014 Moreover the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now.

014:015 For the LORD shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves, provoking the LORD to anger.

014:016 **And he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin.**

1 Kings

016:023 **In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel,** twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

016:024 And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria.

016:025 **But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that were before him.**

016:026 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith **he made Israel to sin**, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities.

Micah

006:016 **For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels; that I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof an hissing:** therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people.

1 Kings

016:029 **And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years.**

016:030 **And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him.**

016:031 And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

016:032 And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.

016:033 **And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.**

1 Kings

015:025 And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.

015:026 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, **and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.**

015:027 And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon.

015:028 Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead.

015:029 **And it came to pass, when he reigned, that he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite:**

015:030 **Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.**

1 Kings

015:033 In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years.

015:034 **And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.**

1 Kings

016:001 Then the word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying,

016:002 Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins;

016:003 Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

016:004 Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat.

016:005 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

016:006 So Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead.

016:007 And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed him.

016:008 In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years.

016:009 And his servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza steward of his house in Tirzah.

016:010 And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead.

016:011 And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he slew all the house of Baasha: he left him not one that pisseth against a wall, neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends.

016:012 Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake against Baasha by Jehu the prophet.

016:013 **For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities.**

We see this today in more subtle ways. For example, people often support a political party and support whatever policies that the party dictates – without questioning if they are in agreement with biblical principles. Or they support a president without questioning if his policies are in agreement with biblical teaching. In these ways, people are lead to supporting sinful policies and sin drives a wedge between them and God.

Jesus also warned people that they should not lead people into sin. This also applies to rulers and political parties.

Matthew

018:001 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

018:002 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

018:003 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

018:004 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

018:005 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

018:006 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

018:007 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

Luke

017:001 Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

017:002 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

Proverbs

028:005 Evil men understand not judgment; but they that seek the LORD understand all things.

Behind the Veil – Christian Politicians?

Most politicians in the US claim they are Christians. Many people vote, in part, on whether the candidate says they are a Christian. And there are people who will support a politician's policies if the politician says they are a Christian. But we should ask ourselves, is the politician a real born-again Christian? Or are they a carnal or reprobate, born-again Christian? Or does the politician only think they are a Christian but never was born-again? Or is the politician only faking it? Or...?

Should We Judge a Politician's Faith?

The bible warns us about judging others.

Matthew

007:001 Judge not, that ye be not judged.

007:002 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

007:003 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

007:004 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

007:005 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

But the bible also warns us that there are non-believers in the church, and worse, non-believers who are ministers or other types of leaders in some churches. We need to be aware of this and stay away from them.

1 John

04:001 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

004:002 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

004:003 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

004:004 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

004:005 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

004:006 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

And who is the 'us' in verse 6? They are the apostles. It is the writings of the bible. If someone rejects the teaching of the bible, the policy is in error.

James

001:003 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

001:004 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Peter

002:001 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

002:002 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

002:003 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

002:009 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

002:010 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

002:011 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

002:012 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

002:013 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;

002:014 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

002:015 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

002:016 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

002:017 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

002:018 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

002:019 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

002:020 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

002:021 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

002:022 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

And just as importantly, we need to examine ourselves that we are in the faith.

2 Corinthians

013:005 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Judge Faith By Works

Yes, we are saved by God's grace, thru faith in Jesus' life, death and resurrection, as is shown in the following verses.

Ephesians

002:008 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

002:009 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

2 Timothy

001:009 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

Romans

005:001 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

005:002 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

So then why did James write the following? Notice especially verse 26.

James

002:013 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

002:014 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

002:015 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

002:016 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

002:017 Even So, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

002:018 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

002:019 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

002:020 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

002:021 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

002:022 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

002:023 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

002:024 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

002:025 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

002:026 For as the body without the spirit is dead, So, faith without works is dead also.

If we are truly born-again Christians having a saving faith, then people should be able to see it in our lives. As the bible says,

Proverbs

009:010 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

John

014:015 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

John

010:027 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

Romans

008:014 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

008:015 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

008:016 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

If someone is a true born-again Christian, they will want to do what God desires. It will show in their lives. Yes, people can drift away from God. But they will want to return. For more on this, see the section entitled "Parables of the Prodigal Son and the Prodigal Pig" in the section called "Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 2 – Christians".

Remember, going to Church does not mean someone is a true believer. Jesus said the following,

Matthew

007:015 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

007:016 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

007:017 Even So, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

007:018 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

007:019 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

007:020 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

007:021 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

007:022 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

007:023 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Psalm 2 also declares that rulers and judges are to serve God. Politicians should study the bible to find out what that means. When a politician prays, "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven", what do they think they are saying? Can a politician pray this and still knowingly vote for something they know is against biblical teaching?

Christianity is not a Ritual

The following story in Zechariah applies very much to today. God never told the Jewish people that they should fast. But at one point in their history, they started to have fast days. Then some went to the prophet Zechariah if they should continue to have fast days. God replied to the prophet that nation Israel failed to do what He wanted (showing mercy and compassion, etc) and So, God punished the nation. What God implied is that they should obey Him. Or, as De. McGee said, "If they heart is right, the ritual is right. If the heart is wrong, the ritual is wrong." Rituals are not important. Loving God and doing His will is important. This also applies to politicians and judges as well as the people of a nation. It is not important if a person follows rituals in the church. What is important is if he loves and believes in God, and does His will.

Zechariah

- 007:001 And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah in the fourth day of the ninth month, even in Chisleu;
- 007:002 When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezer and Regemmelech, and their men, to pray before the LORD,
- 007:003 And to speak unto the priests which were in the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these So, many years?
- 007:004 Then came the word of the LORD of hosts unto me, saying,
- 007:005 Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?
- 007:006 And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?
- 007:007 Should ye not hear the words which the LORD hath cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when men inhabited the south and the plain?
- 007:008 And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying,
- 007:009 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:
- 007:010 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.
- 007:011 But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.
- 007:012 Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.
- 007:013 Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; So, they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:
- 007:014 But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.

Jesus said

John

- 014:015 If ye love me, keep my commandments.
- 014:016 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;
- 014:017 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

The following is part of Jesus prophecy of the last days before the Great Tribulation.

Matthew

024:011 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

024:012 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

Carnal Christian Politicians Part 1 – Function of the Holy Spirit

Before talking about what a carnal Christian is, it is helpful to review the work of the Holy Spirit.

Believe With Your Heart

First, know that the bible often uses the term 'heart' to refer to one's spirit or soul. And remember that a person is a spirit with a soul living in a body. Also remember that God is deeply in love with each of us and desires our love.

Also remember we are saved by faith. But there are 2 kinds of faith – simple acknowledgement that Jesus is real which is sometimes called head faith, and then there is heart faith or believing with one's heart/spirit.

Romans

010:008 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

010:009 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

010:010 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Deuteronomy

004:029 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

004:030 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice;

004:031 (For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them.

The above passage from Deuteronomy has a lot in it. Besides saying we need to seek God with our heart, it also says we need to turn to Him and be obedient. In other words, to turn to God, we need to turn from sin. That is, we should be willing to give up the sin in our lives.

And remember,

James

002:019 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

When we turn to God in faith, we can receive the Holy Spirit.

John

014:026 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Why? What does the Holy Spirit give or do?

Galatians

005:022 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

005:023 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

(More gifts of the Spirit are listed in 1 Corinthians chapter 12.)

It is also important to note the following, that a true believer has the Spirit in them.

Romans

008:008 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

008:009 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if So, be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. **Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.**

008:010 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

008:011 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

We are also sealed with the Holy Spirit

Ephesians

001:013 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

001:014 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

2 Corinthians

001:021 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

001:022 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

Ephesians

004:027 Neither give place to the devil.

004:028 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

004:029 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

004:030 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

John

014:023 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

014:024 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

014:025

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

014:026 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

So in summary, the Holy Spirit indwells all true believers, seals them, guides them (like a conscience), confirms in their hearts God is real, gives them comfort and joy. Blessings that the Holy Spirit can be diminished or lost if people willfully sin, although they cannot lose their salvation.

Carnal Christian Politicians Part 2 – Growing Up In Christ

When someone is born, it takes many years for them to grow up. The first several years children learn (or should learn) how to behave – at least the basics. Then there are 12 years of school where they learn what is needed to be a productive adult. Some go on to college or trade school. Even after they finish all schooling, adults continue to learn what is needed at different stages of life.

The same can be said about growing up as a Christian. Most Christians start out by learning of God and Jesus's life, death and resurrection. As time goes on, they should study all of the bible and learn its lessons.

There are a number of passages which talk about growing up in Christ. The apostles used this analogy of growing up in Christ. And they emphasized the need to learn all of the scripture. The following are some bible passages as examples.

This first passage is Paul's letter to the Corinthians and admonishes them for believing in God and yet living a sinful like – like what you might expect a child to do. It seems these people had only a basic knowledge or understanding of the bible.

1 Corinthians

003:001 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

003:002 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

003:003 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

The following is another passage instructing people to grow in grace and knowledge.

2 Peter

003:018 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

In the following passage, Peter admonishes his readers to avoid all sin in order to grow up as Christians.

1 Peter

002:001 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, all evil speakings,

002:002 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

Ephesians

004:011 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

004:012 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

004:013 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

004:014 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

004:015 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Hebrews

005:011 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

005:012 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

005:013 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

005:014 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Carnal Christian Politicians Part 3 – Losing Fellowship With Christ

But perhaps the passage that troubles people most is below. Some think it says one can lose their salvation. Actually, it says something different. It talks about quenching the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews

006:001 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

006:002 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

006:003 And this will we do, if God permit.

006:004 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

006:005 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

006:006 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

006:007 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

006:008 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

I relied greatly on Dr. J. Vernon McGee's bible commentaries to understand the above passage. Some of the following are my additional thoughts...

Remember that the bible does not contradict itself. So, the correct interpretation is the one that is in harmony (does not contradict) other bible passages. So, let's start with verses 4-6 because these are the verses that most trouble people. Notice that these verses are a clear reference to some true, born-again Christians who have 'fallen away'. These are Christians who, like the prodigal son, have given themselves over to a life of sin, turning their backs on God and not paying attention to His leading. And why is this passage so scary? Because it says, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened ... to renew them again unto repentance". Notice it says "repentance" and *not* "salvation". Why is this an important distinction? Because a person can commit sins without repenting and still be saved.

Now look at verse 7 and 8. Are they referring to the fires of hell? No. These verses are referring to the reward that Christians may receive in heaven for how they live their lives on earth. So, verse 8 above is referring to one's works which may be burned. The following passage in 1 Corinthians gives more insight, especially verse 15.

1 Corinthians

- 003:008 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.
- 003:009 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.
- 003:010 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.
- 003:011 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
- 003:012 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;
- 003:013 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
- 003:014 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.
- 003:015 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet So, as by fire.

When a true Christians turns their back on God and gets into a sinful life style, they can lose the reward they had built up. And it may not be possible for them to ever be in a place where they could do anything good for God again. For example, there have been Christian ministers or preachers who got into a sinful life, maybe thru adultery or getting caught up in some other sinful life style. At this point, their witness for God can be ineffective because who would believe someone who live contrary to their teaching? Yet they have not lost their salvation. They will enter heaven but without a reward – like a person who lost everything in a fire. Dr. McGee's commentary is longer and describes this better So, you may want to look at it if you want a fuller explanation.

Carnal Christian Politicians Part 4 – Carnal Christian Politicians

Sometimes the terms “reprobate Christians” and “carnal Christians” are used. They describe people who call themselves Christians but live/indulge in sin. There is a difference in these 2 terms.

The term ‘carnal’ refers to earthly or fleshly things. The bible talks about Christians being carnally minded, that is, they think and/or strive for earthly pleasures. The following are 2 passages on this. The first passage refers to some Christians who boasted they followed Paul and others who boasted they followed Apollos.

1 Corinthians

- 003:001 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.
- 003:002 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.
- 003:003 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?
- 003:004 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?
- 003:005 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?
- 003:006 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.
- 003:007 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

Romans

- 008:001 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
- 008:002 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.
- 008:003 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:
- 008:004 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
- 008:005 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.
- 008:006 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.
- 008:007 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.
- 008:008 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

So 'carnal Christians' refers to Christians who think about and act on earthly matters and pleasures. They tend to forget about what God wants. They may be true born-again Christians who are similar to the son Jesus described in the parable about the prodigal son.

They may also loose the close fellowship they had with God. That is to say, their love for God may grow cold. And they may have a hard time being lead by the Holy Spirit.

1 John

- 001:003 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.
- 001:004 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.
- 001:005 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.
- 001:006 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:
- 001:007 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Remember that the following lists the gifts of the Holy Spirit

Galations

- 005:022 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
- 005:023 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Carnal Christians may lose these gifts because they are out of fellowship, as described in the section entitled "Carnal Christian Politicians Part 3 – Losing Fellowship With Christ" earlier.

Carnal Christian Politicians Part 5 – Two Types of Carnal Christians

There are basically 2 types of carnal Christians. Some simply lack knowledge. Others got So, far into a sinful life, it is said their consciences are seared.

Immature Christians Who Are Politicians

Hosea

- 004:001 Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.
- 004:002 By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.
- 004:003 Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.
- 004:004 Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another: for thy people are as they that strive with the priest.
- 004:005 Therefore shalt thou fall in the day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will destroy thy mother.
- 004:006 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

This is the problem with many Christians – they do not study God’s Word, the bible. Some believe going to church will teach them everything they need. But very few churches teach the entire bible. And most churches seem to teach maybe 1% of what is in the bible. They do not see or know what the bible teaches about many issues. And many churches teach falsehoods about what is in the bible.

Conscience Seared With A Hot Iron

The following passage is a warning which applies to politicians as much as ordinary people.

1 Timothy

- 004:001 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
- 004:002 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
- 004:003 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

This does not seem to refer to true Christians, but rather to those who heard the gospel and it never took root. The following is the parable. Verses 19-22 describe people who may be referred to in the 1 Timothy passage above – especially verse 22 below.

Matthew

- 013:003 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;
- 013:004 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:
- 013:005 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:
- 013:006 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.
- 013:007 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:
- 013:008 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.
- 013:009 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.
- 013:010 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?
- 013:011 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

- 013:012 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.
- 013:013 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.
- 013:014 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:
- 013:015 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.
- 013:016 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.
- 013:017 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.
- 013:018 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.
- 013:019 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.
- 013:020 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;
- 013:021 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.
- 013:022 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.
- 013:023 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Are people described as “having their conscience seared with a hot iron” true Christians? Although the above passage does not refer to true Christians (indwelt with the Holy Spirit), it is possible that a true Christian can grieve the Holy Spirit to such a degree as to lose His blessings and much of His guidance.

Grieving/Quenching the Holy Spirit

God gives us the Holy Spirit as a guide and comforter. It is kind of a super energized conscience. But if we live in sin, we grieve Him and can lose that closeness and comfort. Notice the following passage which talks about sin and grieving the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians

- 004:022 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;
- 004:023 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;
- 004:024 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.
- 004:025 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.
- 004:026 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:
- 004:027 Neither give place to the devil.
- 004:028 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.
- 004:029 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

004:030 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

004:031 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

004:032 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

If one continues to long, things could get worse, as mentioned in the passage below.

1 Thessalonians

005:019 Quench not the Spirit.

Reprobate Christian Politicians

Let's now look at a passage which defines or describes what a reprobate is.

Romans

001:018 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

001:019 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

001:020 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; So, that they are without excuse:

001:021 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

001:022 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

001:023 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

001:024 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

001:025 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

001:026 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

001:027 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

001:028 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

001:029 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

001:030 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

001:031 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

001:032 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Reprobates revel in sin, and are not Christians in any sense of the word. So, when a speaker uses the term "reprobate Christian", they are talking about someone who lives a sinful life and claims they are a Christian but is not.

These people may actually believe they are Christians when they in fact are not. One problem is that they believe in Jesus with their minds and not with their hearts. Remember what Paul wrote in Romans.

Romans

010:008 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

010:009 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

010:010 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

How can this be done?

004:029 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

To turn to God, we need to be willing to turn from sin.

Yes, there are many who think they are Christians, but are not. The bible cautions us,

2 Corinthians

013:005 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Summary – What Kind of Politician?

So, if a politician advocates policies that are against the bible, what can we say of him? Are they a true Christian that is like the prodigal son? Or are they a reprobate “Christian” – one in name only? It is hard looking into a person’s heart. In Jesus’s parable of the prodigal son, the son eventually returned to his father. The story of the prodigal pig teaches that pigs will always return to the mud. (See the subsection called “Parables of the Prodigal Son and the Prodigal Pig” under the section entitled, “Issues – Acceptance vs Tolerance and Discrimination – Part 2 – Christians”.)

Also, notice that God disciplines His children. If a person is not being disciplined by God for overt sins, they may not be a true Christian.

Proverbs

003:011 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

003:012 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

Hebrews

012:006 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

012:007 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

012:008 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

012:009 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

012:010 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

012:011 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Who are the Christian politicians? A better question is, are we real Christians? Are we mature Christians studying God's word? We can and should evaluate politicians for ourselves when deciding how to vote. If we pray, "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven", then we should want politicians who will serve God and do God's will. As Psalm 2 says,

Psalm

002:010 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

002:011 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

How do we identify them? There is a description of bad politicians in Psalm 2 also,

Psalm

002:001 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

002:002 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

002:003 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

The idea is, these bad rulers want to do away with God's will.

But in the end, they will not be successful. (Remember, the Great Tribulation Period is coming.)

Psalm

002:004 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision.

002:005 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

002:006 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

002:007 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

002:008 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

002:009 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Behind the Veil – Government Persecution of Christians

The 2020 US presidential election between the incumbent, President Trump, and Joe Biden. Trump was seen as crass, a liar, and the like. Biden was seen as a friendly, nice guy. But their policies were very different. Trump's policies were seen as friendly to Christians. Biden's policies were seen as being friendly to everyone except Christians. When President Trump lost his re-election bid, many were upset because of Biden's hostility towards Christians.

There are a few things Christians should remember.

Daniel

004:017 This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

So ultimately, the selection of Biden was God's decision. Why? Because this passage is saying God gives people the leaders they deserve. They are not the best people in the country, but the basest, or the least common denominator. So, if society is good, So, are its leaders. And if society is bad, So, are its leaders. Notice the following passage in Proverbs.

Proverbs

008:015 By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

008:016 By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

So, God even selects our judges in addition to our leaders. Perhaps that is why RBG died when she did – So, Trump could select a Christian for SCOTUS. (The Democrats have been very hostile towards having Christians on any court.) But why was this important to God? The following may give a clue.

Psalms

046:001 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

046:002 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

046:003 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

046:004 There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.

046:005 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.

046:006 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

046:007 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

046:008 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

046:009 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

046:010 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

046:011 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

2 Peter

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

- 002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;
- 002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;
- 002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:
- 002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)
- 002:009 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:
- 002:010 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

These verses teach that God protects His own, while still punishing the others. Perhaps God did this (allowed ACB to be confirmed and the Senate to stay Republican) to provide some protection for Christians against the majority of Americans. We should thank God for His protection and pray that He continues it for all true Christians.

And be assured, real Christians will suffer persecution. The following chapter is So, rich in teaching that it is completely listed below.

2 Timothy

- 003:001 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.
- 003:002 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
- 003:003 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,
- 003:004 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;
- 003:005 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.
- 003:006 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,
- 003:007 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.
- 003:008 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, So, do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.
- 003:009 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as their's also was.
- 003:010 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,
- 003:011 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.
- 003:012 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
- 003:013 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.
- 003:014 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;
- 003:015 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
- 003:016 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:
- 003:017 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Notice verses 1-5 describes much of American society today. Today, much of American society is becoming more and more like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, which God destroyed. Verses 6-9 describe people who have a knowledge of the bible and Christian teachings. But they never fully understand it and never are born again, although they may think they do. Verses 10-11 remind us of the persecutions suffered by the Apostle Paul, and that God delivered him from all. So, we should see this as encouragement for us that if God delivered Paul, then God will deliver us.

Verse 12 is of special importance. It tells us that all real Christians will suffer persecution. It may not be continuous. It may not have occurred yet. But we all will suffer some form. Perhaps it is lack of school choice. Or boycotts of our businesses for having Christian principles. Or maybe society will try to force you, in your job or business, to do something sinful. Or maybe will be something as obvious as being called names like 'homophobic'. Some have even called all (including Evangelicals) who support or voted for President Trump things like 'deplorables' or 'racists' when they were simply trying to chose the candidate who supports biblical principle best.

Verse 13 reminds us again that these evil people will increase and become worse.

Verses 14-17 encourages us to keep studying the scriptures which give us wisdom. And it reminds us to be steadfast in the faith and live for God.

Sadly, many carnal Christians, and those Christians who have seared consciences because of sin, and those who failed to study the bible, are falling for lies and deception as described in verses above. The following is a sad reflection on this.

Hosea

004:006 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

We need to pray that God protect us from trials, persecutions, and the evils to come.

Behind the Veil – The World Persecutes Christians

Christians suffer persecution in many ways. Sometimes it is direct as in cases of Christians being murdered in some countries. Sometimes it is more subtle like having laws which try forcing them to do something sinful, like providing services for gay weddings. Non-Christians may not understand this second example. But it is true. And the bible teaches that Christians should expect it, and gives reasons why, and it gives encouragement.

The apostle Paul wrote,

2 Timothy

003:012 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

003:013 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

003:014 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

003:015 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

003:016 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

003:017 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Jesus said,

John

015:018 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

015:019 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

015:020 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

015:021 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, ☐ because they know not him that sent me.

015:022 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

015:023 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

015:024 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

015:025 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

015:026 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

015:027 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

The apostle Peter wrote,

1 Peter

004:012 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

004:013 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

004:014 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

004:015 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

004:016 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

004:017 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

004:018 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

004:019 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

Jesus said,

John

016:033 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

There is some disagreement about the following verse. Some say, when Jesus spoke it, it refers to all true believers. Others say Jesus was referring to the Jews and anti-Semitism. The phrase “for my name’s sake” seems to imply believers.

Matthew

024:009 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

The following passage provides some comfort.

2 Peter

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

002:009 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

The NIV translation uses the word “trials” instead of “temptations” in verse 9.

Summary

Notice James 4:4, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." So, we need to avoid sinful things.

Jesus said in John 15:17-19, "These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." So, Christians will always be at odds with non-Christians.

Non-Christians will push back again against Christian morals, freedom of religion, God, and the like. Remember the stories of the flood and Sodom and Gomorrah?

But notice what Romans 12:18-21 instructs us, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Behind the Veil - God Restrains Evil

The bible teaches that the Holy Spirit (God) restrains/limits evil in the world. This will end for a while during the Great Tribulation. God does this in several ways.

Government Restrict Evil

Romans

013:001 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

013:002 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

013:003 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

013:004 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

God Eliminate Evil Doers

The following passage is from a period before the Great Flood. When the passage speaks of 'sons of God' and 'daughters of men', it is a poetic way of saying 'god fearing men' and 'godless women' or 'evil, idolatrous women'. Generally, this leads people into sin.

In this first passage, God says He will not always strive with people. God is patient and there are examples in the bible of God waiting hundreds of years sometimes before taking major action. For example, Noah spent 100 years building the arch and yet no one outside his family repented. And the Israelis were in Egypt for 400 years, in part, because God wanted to give the Canaanites time.

Genesis

006:001 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

006:002 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

006:003 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

006:004 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

006:005 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

006:006 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

The following passage speaks of judgement. That is one way that God restrains evil from spreading, that is, by removing it from heaven and by removing it from earth.

2 Peter

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

God Protects His Own

In the following passage, Jesus prays for the safety of those which are His. This shows that God protects His own.

John

017:015 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

Notice especially verse 9

2 Peter

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

002:009 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

The following passage describes part of the Great Tribulation period that will happen after the 6th seal (judgement) is opened and before the 7th seal is opened. Notice that God is restraining things until 144,000 people are 'sealed'.

Revelation

007:001 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

007:002 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

007:003 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

007:004 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

The following passage relates to the Great Tribulation Period. The English language has changed since the KJV translation was completed in 1611. In verse 6, the term 'withholdeth' means held back. The term 'letteth will let' means 'the one who hold back will continue to do so' or 'he who hinders will continue to hinder'. I suggest reading a newer translation such as the NIV version. It is the Holy Spirit who restricts/hinders evil in the world.

2 Thessalonians

002:006 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

002:007 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

002:008 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

002:009 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

God Directly Intervenes

Notice that in the following passage, Satan can do nothing to Job without God allowing it. If you read the entire book of Job, you will learn why God allowed it. But the point is here, Satan could do nothing unless God allowed it.

Job

001:007 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

001:008 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

001:009 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

001:010 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

001:011 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

001:012 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So, Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Behind the Veil – Why Mysteries

There are a lot of mysteries in the bible. Some can be uncovered by study, prayer, and leading of the Holy Spirit. However, some mysteries are not revealed at all.

Science Mysteries

The bible is a book leading people to a saving faith and relationship with God. It is not a science book. For example, the entire creation story is summarized in just a few passages. Many people wish God had provided more information on this topic and others.

The following passage provides some insight on why there are mysteries in the bible.

Proverbs

025:002 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.

Spiritual Mysteries

God would like all people to repent and turn to Him.

2 Peter

003:008 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

003:009 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

So, God gives time for people to repent and turn to Him. However, God also gave people a free will and allows people to choose, and some will choose not to come to Him. So, was God not more explicit when giving His words to the prophets and Jesus's disciples? Why didn't God become more visible? Why didn't Jesus perform miracles for the entire world to see? Why did God make some of His teaching unknowable to non-believers? The following passage gives some insight.

Matthew

013:010 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

013:011 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

013:012 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

013:013 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

013:014 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

013:015 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

013:016 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

013:017 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

It must be remembered that the above verses are part of chapter 13 which contains the parable of the sower.

Verse 15 is written in sort of a mocking tone, noting that these people have closed their hearts, ears and eyes. They have closed them because they reject the God and His word. The term 'lest' here means 'because they do not want to' and said in a rather mocking tone. These are people who do not want to know God's ways or what is sin. As Jesus said in

John

003:016 For God So, loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

003:017 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

003:018 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

003:019 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

003:020 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

Verse 14-15 are from the following passage in Isaiah. Once again in verse 10, Isaiah is told to preach God's words to them and it will cause them to make a decision to *turn to or from God*, and it is known this will cause them to harden their hearts and turn from God. Once again, in a rather mocking tone.

Isaiah

006:008 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

006:009 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

006:010 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Isaiah was being sent to the nation of Israel which turned its back on God and turned to idols. Isaiah was to teach God's way to them, making them accountable for their sins. God knew that thru teaching, the people would be forced to make a choice and that these people would reject Him and cause them to harden their hearts. When people are forced to make a choice, they 'harden' their hearts to the alternative which they reject. That, I believe, is the thought here. And the parable of the sower explains why people reject the scriptures. The problem is not with the scriptures. It is because of the soil – the people themselves. People who are 'good soil' will understand, or at least have the ability to understand in time with the Holy Spirit's guidance. For completeness, the entire passage in chapter 13 is included below.

Matthew

013:001 The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.

013:002 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, So, that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

013:003 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

013:004 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

013:005 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

013:006 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

- 013:007 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:
- 013:008 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.
- 013:009 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.
- 013:010 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?
- 013:011 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.
- 013:012 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.
- 013:013 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.
- 013:014 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:
- 013:015 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.
- 013:016 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.
- 013:017 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.
- 013:018 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.
- 013:019 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.
- 013:020 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;
- 013:021 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.
- 013:022 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.
- 013:023 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Now notice the next passage which is from Revelations. It is a message to the church of the Laodiceans.

Revelation

- 003:014 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;
- 003:015 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.
- 003:016 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.
- 003:017 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:
- 003:018 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.
- 003:019 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.
- 003:020 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

003:021 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

003:022 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Notice verses 15-16. If the church was 'hot', it would be a church filled with born again believers filled with the Holy Spirit. If it was a 'cold' church, it would be one which lacks teaching. So, this seems to be a church that had knowledge of the scriptures, but was not born again. And these can be some of the hardest people to reach. I do not know the details of this particular church.

But I have known some which are 'liberal Christians' and fit this description. They have the bible. But only teach portions that make people feel good. *And they reject portions they do not understand or do not like what they say. They falsely claim there are flaws, errors, or inconsistencies in scripture.* They have 'head faith' – that is, they know the scriptures. But they never opened their hearts to God/Jesus. These people can be the hardest people to reach because they think they know what the bible teaches. And because they think they know it all, they will not listen and turn their hearts towards God.

Sometimes too much biblical knowledge can cause people to be jaded or hardened to the bible. They have some head faith but no heart faith. They think they are wise but have never come to true faith.

This passage also reminds me of churches which are little more than social clubs. They only teach a few basic gospel passages in a year and then repeat then every year, not going into any depth. And the members mainly belong to these churches because they became social clubs.

I believe this further illustrates why some biblical teaching is 'hidden' to non-believers. There is a danger of people becoming 'jaded' or 'hardened' towards the bible. Some people may gain great knowledge of the bible without ever really being converted and in that way become 'jaded' or 'hardened against' the bible. Remember,

Romans

010:008 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

010:009 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

010:010 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Deuteronomy

004:029 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

Faith is from the heart. People need to be drawn to God thru their hearts, not just their minds. They need the scriptures which will draw their hearts to Him.

Issues - Cancel Culture

Background

So, what is “cancel culture”. In a way, it is kind of like a boycott. It is the mass withdraw of support for companies or people who express a view contrary to popular ones. This ‘withdraw of support’ can include protests or other actions to silence those people or companies. And it can also include boycotts of those companies.

Such actions are not necessarily wrong or bad. Christians should separate themselves from those who live in sin. Of course, everyone sins. But I believe the thought here is that there are some who knowing live a sinful life, without regret or repentance.

Psalms

001:001 **Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.**

2 Thessalonians

03:006 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that **ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly**, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

2 Thessalonians

003:014 **And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.**

003:015 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Romans

16:017 Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.**

But what has become common in today’s society (of 2022) is that those involved with popular cancel culture do not know, or care to know, different sides of an issue. They believe their side is the only correct one without learning the other side. And worse, prohibit others from even talking about an alternative political view. These people largely lack biblical knowledge and insight.

Danger of Cancel Culture

In court, juries are instructed to keep an open mind as they hear arguments. This is supported by bible passages that reminds readers that when someone hears something, they must learn the other side of the story too.

Proverbs

018:017 **He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.**

And the bible reminds us to be unbiased in judgement

Proverbs

024:023 These things also belong to the wise. **It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.**

024:024 **He that saith unto the wicked, Thou are righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:**

024:025 But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.

So the principles are these, learn both sides before making a judgement, do not be biased towards certain people, and do not follow the ways of the wicked or pronounce their views as good.

Do Not Force Yourself

Matthew

010:005 **These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:**

010:006 **But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

010:007 **And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

010:008 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

010:009 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

010:010 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

010:011 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

010:012 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

010:013 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

010:014 **And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.**

010:015 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

010:016 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

010:017 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

010:018 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

010:019 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

010:020 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

010:021 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

010:022 **And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.**

010:023 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

010:024 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

010:025 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

010:026 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

010:027 **What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.**

A Christian's Duty

Mark

16:014 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

016:015 **And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.**

016:016 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Acts

005:025 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

005:026 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

005:027 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

005:028 **Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.**

005:029 **Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.**

Behind the Veil - Epitaphs

It is common when a person dies, family members will give a little speech, an epitaph, highlighting the life of the deceased at the funeral. Well, the bible also provides summaries of the Hebrew kings, both the ones that reigned in the north, Israel, and the south, Judah, after the nation split in two. These summaries are, as it were, God's epitaphs of the kings. It highlights how God viewed each of the kings. Notice that these epitaphs do not list any great human accomplishments. But instead, the epitaphs state how closely the kings hearts were to God, and whether they desired to do His will. That is what is important to God, not building projects or scientific breakthroughs. And it is important to notice the continual state of war in these nations. As stated in

Isaiah

048:022 **There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked**

And again in

Isaiah

057:021 **There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked**

Now, the epitaphs...

1 Kings

015:001 Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam **the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah.**

015:002 Three years reigned he in Jerusalem. and his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

015:003 **And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him:** and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father.

015:004 Nevertheless for David's sake did the LORD his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem:

015:005 Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

015:006 **And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.**

015:007 **Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.**

015:008 And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.

1 Kings

015:009 And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel **reigned Asa over Judah.**

015:010 **And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem.** And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

015:011 **And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father.**

015:012 **And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.**

015:013 **And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron.**

015:014 **But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days.**

015:015 And he brought in the things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the LORD, silver, and gold, and vessels.

015:016 **And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.**

- 015:017 And Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.
- 015:018 Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent them to Benhadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,
- 015:019 There is a league between me and thee, and between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.
- 015:020 So Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abelbethmaachah, and all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali.
- 015:021 And it came to pass, when Baasha heard thereof, that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah.
- 015:022 Then king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah; none was exempted: and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.
- 015:023 The rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.
- 015:024 And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.

It is interesting to note 1 Kings 15:11 states “**And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD**”.

1 Kings

- 015:025 **And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel** in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years.
- 015:026 **And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.**
- 015:027 And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon.
- 015:028 Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead.
- 015:029 And it came to pass, when he reigned, that he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite:
- 015:030 Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.
- 015:031 Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

1 Kings

- 015:032 And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.
- 015:033 In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years.
- 015:034 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin
- 016:001 **Then the word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying,**

- 016:002 **Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins;**
- 016:003 **Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.**
- 016:004 **Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat.**
- 016:005 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?
- 016:006 So Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead.
- 016:007 **And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed him**
- 016:008 In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years.
- 016:009 And his servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza steward of his house in Tirzah.
- 016:010 And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead.
- 016:011 And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he slew all the house of Baasha: he left him not one that pisseth against a wall, neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends.
- 016:012 **Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake against Baasha by Jehu the prophet.**
- 016:013 **For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities.**
- 016:014 Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

1 Kings

- 016:015 In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did **Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah**. And the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines.
- 016:016 And the people that were encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp.
- 016:017 And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah.
- 016:018 **And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died.**
- 016:019 **For his sins which he sinned in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin.**
- 016:020 Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

1 Kings

- 016:021 Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: **half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri.**

- 016:022 But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: So, Tibni died, and Omri reigned.
- 016:023 In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.
- 016:024 And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria.
- 016:025 **But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that were before him.**
- 016:026 **For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities.**
- 016:027 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might that he shewed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?
- 016:028 So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.

1 Kings

- 016:029 And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years.
- 016:030 And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him.
- 016:031 And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.
- 016:032 And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.
- 016:033 And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.
- 016:034 In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun

Summary

Looking back on these epitaphs we should ask ourselves, “Is the current president and congress doing God’s will”, and “Does the current president and congress have a heart for God, a desire to do His will”. So, many do not. So, many are of the same caliber as the evil kings of Judah and Israel. They desire to do the will of the people, but not of God. And the Left is pushing their non-Christian beliefs, their non-Christian agenda, on America, pushing and encouraging America to engage in their sins.

And then there is a matter of war. Ever notice the nearly constant state of war in the US? Even when there seems to be peace, the US is involved in supporting wars by supplying weapons. Is this a punishment from God? Remember,

Isaiah

048:022 **There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked**

Prophecies of Society near the End Times

There are some bible passages which describe the world before the Great Tribulation period. One could probably write a book about this. But the following are a few just to highlight what is to come. Some of this can be seen in the world today.

Gospel Preached Throughout the World

Matthew

024:004 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

024:005 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

024:006 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

024:007 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

024:008 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

024:009 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

024:010 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

024:011 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

024:012 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

024:013 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

024:014 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

To me, this is one of the most remarkable prophecies. Verses 5 thru 8 may apply to many periods in the last 2,000 years because there have been many wars, earthquakes, etc in the past 2,000 years.

Regarding verse 5, there are many religious groups which have sprung up since the time of Christ, including some which claim to be Christian and yet deny the fundamentals of Christianity. At least one of those founders went So, far as to personally rewrite large sections of the bible.

Regarding verses 6 and 7, there seems to have been some war going on somewhere in the world for the past 2000 years. In more recent times, there have been 2 major World Wars and the US has been involved with wars almost continually. Similarly, there have been famines, pestilences and earthquakes frequently thru the ages. But we hear of them more today because of modern communications.

Verses 9 and 10 seem not to have been fulfilled yet because Christians are not yet hated by all nations, at least not fully in all nations. However, persecution of Christians is rampant in parts of the world. In some Muslim nations, one can get the death penalty for converting from Islam to Christianity. On May 7, 2020 it was reported in the news that the Israeli Communications Minister was going to close down a TV station called 'GOD TV' that broadcast Christian teachings. On the same day, another news story reported calls for a US army chaplain to be disciplined for sending an email telling chaplains of a Christian pamphlet. The chaplain's lawyers said it was within the scope of his duties and regulations. There have been bakers and photographers who had law suits brought against them in the US by state/local governments for not providing services to gay marriages, even though this was against the provider's religious beliefs. There have been other overt statements of hate by celebrities against Christians.

Certainly, there have been many, and continue to have many false prophets as mentioned in verse 11. Examples are Mohamed who created Islam, Joseph Smith who created Mormonism, James Jones who killed his 900 followers in 1978 are some examples

But perhaps the most remarkable verse is 14 because it declares the gospel will be preached throughout the world. Two thousand years ago this may have been hard to see because of the size of the world and multiple languages. However, today the gospel is being preached throughout the world over the radio, TV and internet in hundreds of different languages. There is hardly a person who cannot be reached with the gospel.

The Great Tribulation Period

The passage in Matthew continues with the Great Tribulation Period. This does not have much description of society before the Great Tribulation. Instead, it is a short summary of the period and is included here for completeness of that chapter in Matthew.

Matthew

024:015 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

024:016 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

024:017 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:□

024:018 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

024:019 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

024:020 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

024:021 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

024:022 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

024:023 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

024:024 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and□ shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

024:025 Behold, I have told you before.

024:026 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

024:027 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; So, shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

024:028 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

024:029 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

024:030 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

024:031 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The passage in Matthew continues with Jesus's return.

Matthew

- 024:032 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:
- 024:033 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.
- 024:034 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.
- 024:035 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.
- 024:036 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.
- 024:037 But as the days of Noe were, So, shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
- 024:038 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,
- 024:039 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; So, shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
- 024:040 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.
- 024:041 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.
- 024:042 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.
- 024:043 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.
- 024:044 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.
- 024:045 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?
- 024:046 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find So, doing.
- 024:047 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.
- 024:048 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;
- 024:049 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;
- 024:050 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,
- 024:051 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth

The reference about of people being removed from the field refers to non-Christians being removed from the earth. Yes, there are some that believe this refers to the rapture which occurs before the Great Tribulation Period. But that occurs before this period. So, this passage must reference the removal of non-Christians, which is also mentioned in other prophecies.

A Falling Away From God

And notice the following prophecy in verse 3. The 'falling away' refers to a falling away from God.

2 Thessalonians

- 002:001 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,
- 002:002 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.
- 002:003 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

1 Timothy

004:001 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

And again in the Gospel of Luke

Luke

018:006 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

018:007 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

018:008 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Notice that the question is raised in a way to imply the answer is 'no'. Actually, books have been written about the Great Tribulation period to come based on prophecies in the bible. This writing is not intended to go into details of that time. But there is a prophecy that group of Christians will be on the earth at that time as witnesses to the world.

Call Good Evil and Evil Good

2 Timothy

003:001 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

003:002 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

003:003 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

003:004 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

003:005 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

003:006 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

003:007 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

The above is not only a prophecy, but a warning to those who may fall into those categories. For example, we may ask ourselves, "Are we lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"?

And there is a warning of what Christians can expect.

2 Timothy

003:012 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

003:013 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

One problem that has always plagued the Church is false doctrine and heresies that crept in thru teachers who never knew God. There are even warnings of this in the Bible.

2 Timothy

004:003 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

004:004 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Jude

001:003 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

001:004 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

One example of this was the 16th century by some in the church to sell 'indulgences', teaching people they could live as they please if they buy a piece of paper excusing their behavior. We see it today in many forms. Some churches deny the correctness of the bible and say we should only accept what is 'reasonable' to believe in the bible. Or by cherry picking verses to support a certain philosophy.

1 John

004:001 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

004:002 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

004:003 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

The Nation of Israel Must Exist, But Does Not Know God

The prophecy in Zechariah chapters 12-14 make it clear that the nation of Israel must exist before the end times, and that the people are not Christian, they are far from God. Chapters 12-14 are included below for completeness. Passages like 14:9 make it clear this is an end time prophecy because it refers to Jesus's rule over the earth.

Zechariah

012:001 The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.

012:002 Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.

012:003 And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

012:004 In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.

012:005 And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God.

012:006 In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.

012:007 The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.

012:008 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

012:009 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

- 012:010 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.
- 012:011 In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.
- 012:012 And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart;
- 012:013 The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart;
- 012:014 All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart
- 013:001 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.
- 013:002 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.
- 013:003 And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.
- 013:004 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive:
- 013:005 But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.
- 013:006 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.
- 013:007 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.
- 013:008 And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.
- 013:009 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God
- 014:001 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.
- 014:002 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.
- 014:003 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.
- 014:004 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.
- 014:005 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.
- 014:006 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark:
- 014:007 But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.

- 014:008 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.
- 014:009 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.
- 014:010 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.
- 014:011 And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.
- 014:012 And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.
- 014:013 And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.
- 014:014 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.
- 014:015 And So, shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.
- 014:016 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.
- 014:017 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.
- 014:018 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.
- 014:019 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.
- 014:020 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.
- 014:021 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts

Prophecy of Future Judgment & Millennium Kingdom

The following is not a comprehensive list of all Bible passages which talk of the end times. It is simply a sampling to show that God is still in control and is still judging nations.

This write up is not comprehensive. It is only an overview bringing together a variety of bible passages on this period, and highlighting key teachings on the subject.

Obadiah and Joel are the first 2 prophets to write on the Day of the Lord. Zephaniah is the last of the Old Testament prophets who wrote on this.

Prophecy On The Great Kingdoms of the World

Daniel

002:001 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.

002:002 Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So, they came and stood before the king.

002:003 And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.

002:004 Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.

002:005 The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.

What made this difficult is that the king refused to tell the wise men what he dreamt. None of the wise men could tell the king what he dreamt. But when Daniel heard the king's command, he asked that he be allowed to describe the dream and give its interpretation. He prayed to God and God revealed it to him. Then...

Daniel

002:031 Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

002:032 This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,

002:033 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

002:034 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

002:035 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

002:036 This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

002:037 Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

002:038 And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

002:039 And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

- 002:040 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.
- 002:041 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.
- 002:042 And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, So, the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.
- 002:043 And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.
- 002:044 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.
- 002:045 Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

So, the head of gold represented the Babylonian king's empire. The shoulders of silver represent the Macedonian Greek empire. The belly and thighs of brass represent the Persian empire. The legs and feet of iron and clay represent the Roman empire. The stone cut out without hands represent Jesus.

Some theologians believe the Roman empire (or a form of it) will be resurrected in the last days of earth. Notice the later stages of the Roman empire are represented by a mix of clay and iron. I am not saying this is the European Union. But it kind of reminds me of it. Each country is strong but these countries are only tied together loosely by a treaty.

Timeline of End Times

There are actually many passages on the end times. These are some of the key passages describing them in order in which they will unfold.

Matthew

- 024:003 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?
- 024:004 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.
- 024:005 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.
- 024:006 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.
- 024:007 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.
- 024:008 All these are the beginning of sorrows.
- 024:009 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.
- 024:010 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.
- 024:011 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.
- 024:012 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.
- 024:013 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.
- 024:014 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

- 024:015 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)
- 024:016 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:
- 024:017 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:□
- 024:018 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.
- 024:019 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!
- 024:020 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:
- 024:021 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.
- 024:022 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.
- 024:023 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.
- 024:024 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and □ shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.
- 024:025 Behold, I have told you before.
- 024:026 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.
- 024:027 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; So, shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
- 024:028 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.
- 024:029 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:
- 024:030 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.
- 024:031 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Matthew

- 024:040 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.
- 024:041 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.
- 024:042 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.
- 024:043 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.
- 024:044 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

There seems to be 2 'raptures'. All the bible verses regarding them are not listed here. The purpose of this writing is not to give a thorough, detailed study in the end times. It is to provide an overview. One rapture is the removal of Christians from the earth prior to the Great Tribulation – with the exception of 144,000 who remain as witnesses. The second 'rapture' is the removal of non-Christians when Christ returns to the earth at the start of the Millennium Kingdom. Some believe that verses 40-44 refer to the rapture of the Church before the Great Tribulation Period. Others state that this passage refers to when Christ returns – the ones who still reject Christ will be removed from the world and only those who turned to and believe in Christ will remain for the Millenium Kingdom.

Some say that verses 7-14 above apply to the Great Tribulation Period as further described in Revelation chapter 6. Others say this occurs before the Great Tribulation Period and is not related to Revelation chapter 6.

There are also 2 views on verse 9. Some say it refers to true Christians. Others, such as Dr. McGee, say this refers to the Jews and it talks about worldwide anti-Semitism. They go on to say the verses starting with verse 9 refer to the Great Tribulation Period.

Some may have noticed that verses 32-39 were not listed above. That is because the above is a timeline of events. Those verses do not discuss this. They are below for the interested reader.

Matthew

024:032 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

024:033 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

024:034 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

024:035 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

024:036 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

024:037 But as the days of Noe were, So, shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

024:038 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

024:039 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; So, shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Signs and Sins of the End Times

The Bible talks of the 'endtimes'. This is the period before Jesus returns. It includes the period before Great Tribulation.

The following passage in second Timothy is a prophecy of the period leading up to the Great Tribulation. It contains signs of that age. It should be read slowly because it contains a lot of thought. Especially note the warning in verses 4-5 and verses 7-8. In this time, people study God's word but never come to a true understanding because of their corrupt and reprobate minds and unwillingness to admit their sin.

Or in other words, people will believe what they want to believe rather than accept God's Word. And they twist the meaning of God's Word to suit their desires. Or in other words, this is a period where more fall into apostasy. (Note: Jannes and Jambres are the magicians who tried to duplicate the miracles performed by Moses. Moses performed miracles thru the power of God. These magicians performed miracles thru the power of Satan.)

2 Timothy

003:001 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

003:002 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

003:003 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

003:004 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

003:005 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

003:006 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

003:007 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

003:008 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, So, do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

There is So, much crammed into those 8 verses above. Notice

In verse 1, this section refers to the last days

Verse 2 states people love themselves and revel in sins of selfishness

The term 'without natural affection' in verse 3 refers to sex other than that between a man and woman

Verses 5-6 state they love pleasure more than God, and play (pretend) to be religious

Verse 7 is may be the scariest because they know the bible but never come to a saving faith. It is sad and tragic that this is true for So, many people and churches today.

The Bible gives the following warning, that Christians will suffer persecution. This can be in several forms. Much of it can be by courts and governments with statements and laws which have a negative impact on Christians.

2 Timothy

003:012 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

The following is another warning. I suspect the statement 'deceiving, and being deceived' means society will teach evil is good and good is evil.

2 Timothy

003:013 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

The following is another warning of growing apostasy. This passage sounds like it could apply to today. How many church bodies have adopted doctrine, not based on the Bible, but are based on what people want to hear? So, many so-called Christians believe what they want to believe rather than accept what the Bible teaches.

2 Timothy

004:003 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

004:004 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Jude

001:017 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

001:018 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

001:019 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

The point is that there are some (today, may be most) who claim to be Christians who mock Biblical teachings and try to sway Christians to their false beliefs. They may sway the weaker Christians and divide the Christian church by their perverted teachings.

How should true Christians react?

Jude

001:020 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

001:021 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

001:022 And of some have compassion, making a difference:

001:023 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

In other words, build up your faith, have compassion on unbelievers and try to lead them to a saving faith, yet hate anything related to sin.

Blasphemy And Opposing God's Laws

There are numerous prophecies on the Great Tribulation period which is yet to come. In summary, the Great Tribulation period lasts 7 years. In the first 3.5 years there is peace and the last 3.5 years there is great wars and suffering. At the end of this period, Christ returns to rule. One of the prophecies of this period is in Daniel chapter 7. Verse 25 summarizes the sin of the ruler of that age. It is also a warning to us today.

Daniel

007:024 And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

007:025 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

007:026 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

007:027 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

007:028 Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.

Come Unexpectedly

2 Peter

003:003 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

003:004 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

003:005 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

003:006 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

003:007 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

003:008 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

003:009 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

003:010 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

003:011 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

003:012 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

003:013 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Rapture

1 Thessalonians

004:013 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

004:014 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even So, them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

004:015 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

004:016 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

004:017 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and So, shall we ever be with the Lord.

Notice verse 17. It says we will be caught up in the air to meet the Lord in the air. But there are other passages which say that Jesus will return to the earth and rule. And those passages say that the evil people who remain on earth after the Great Tribulation will be removed from the earth leaving only believers. So, this passage in 1 Thessalonians must be referring to an event prior to the Great Tribulation period. Some disagree with this citing that the bible says Jesus second coming will be after the Great Tribulation period. But notice the 1 Thessalonian passage says believers will be caught up with Jesus in the air – not on earth. So, that event is not His second coming to the earth.

1 Thessalonians

005:001 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

005:002 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord So, cometh as a thief in the night.

005:003 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

005:004 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Some other passages which support the teaching of the rapture are in Revelation. First, notice that God told John to write down things in a certain order.

Revelation

001:019 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

Messages to the churches are in chapters 2-3. Those were the things that 'are'. These messages were to specific churches. But these churches also represent churches of 7 different periods of times Then notice the start of chapter 4

Revelation

004:001 After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

The NIV translation uses the phrase “after this” instead of hereafter. The point is, these are things which occur after the true church.

Another passage suggesting the church will not go thru the Great Tribulation is the following.

Romans

005:008 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

005:009 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

005:010 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

This passage refers to the afterlife. But if it is true that we are saved from God’s wrath in eternity, then it seems to follow the true church will not have to suffer in the Great Tribulation. And

2 Peter

002:004 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

002:005 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

002:006 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

002:007 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

002:008 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

002:009 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

Revelation

003:010 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

The NIV translation uses the word ‘trial’ instead of the word ‘temptation’ in the above passage. Another passage that seems to support the doctrine of a rapture is as follows.

2 Thessalonians

002:001 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

002:002 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

002:003 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

002:004 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; So, that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Another passage that suggests there will be a rapture is as follows

John

005:024 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

This being so, why would true Christians have to go thru the Great Tribulation? It seems not.

There has been, and still is apostasy in many organized churches. This is nothing new. So, why would it be mentioned in the above verse? This verse seems to indicate that the churches are in total apostasy, and there are no true believers in this falling away. Even today, there are true believers in churches that have gone into apostasy. So, for the total apostasy to happen, all believers must be removed. Remember that Jesus indicated there would be total apostasy in the church.

Luke

018:006 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

018:007 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

018:008 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Order of Resurrection

People are not all resurrected from the dead at the same time.

1 Thessalonians

004:016 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

004:017 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and So, shall we ever be with the Lord.

The above verses in 1 Thessalonians refer to the Rapture which comes before the Great tribulation period. The following passage refers to after the Great Tribulation.

Revelation

020:004 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

020:005 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

020:006 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

So "The First" Resurrection seems to be in 2 parts. After that, those who rejected Christ will be raised and judged.

Corinthians

015:020 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

015:021 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

015:022 For as in Adam all die, even So, in Christ shall all be made alive.

015:023 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

015:024 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

015:025 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

015:026 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

The following passage indicates the people who died before Jesus's first coming will be raised after the Great Tribulation Period. Notice verse 1 mentions that period and what happens in verse 2 happens after that period.

Daniel

012:001 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

012:002 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

012:003 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Before the Great Tribulation

Joel

002:030 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

002:031 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.

002:032 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Gospel Preached Throughout the World

Matthew

024:004 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

024:005 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

024:006 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

024:007 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

024:008 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

024:009 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

024:010 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

024:011 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

024:012 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

024:013 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

024:014 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

To me, this is one of the most remarkable prophecies. Verses 5 thru 8 may apply to many periods in the last 2,000 years because there have been many wars, earthquakes, etc in the past 2,000 years.

Regarding verse 5, there are many religious groups which have sprung up since the time of Christ, including some which claim to be Christian and yet deny the fundamentals of Christianity. At least one of those founders went so far as to personally rewrite large sections of the bible.

Regarding verses 6 and 7, there seems to have been some war going on somewhere in the world for the past 2000 years. In more recent times, there have been 2 major World Wars and the US has been involved with wars almost continually. Similarly, there have been famines, pestilences and earthquakes frequently thru the ages. But we hear of them more today because of modern communications.

Some say that verses 7-14 above apply to the Great Tribulation Period as further described in Revelation chapter 6. Others say this occurs before the Great Tribulation Period and is not related to Revelation chapter 6.

Verses 9 and 10 seem not to have been fulfilled yet because Christians are not yet hated by all nations, at least not fully in all nations. However, persecution of Christians is rampant in parts of the world. In some Muslim nations, one can get the death penalty for converting from Islam to Christianity. On May 7, 2020 it was reported in the news that the Israeli Communications Minister was going to close down a TV station called 'GOD TV' that broadcast Christian teachings. On the same day, another news story reported calls for a US army chaplain to be disciplined for sending an email telling chaplains of a Christian pamphlet. The chaplain's lawyers said it was within the scope of his duties and regulations. There have been bakers and photographers who had law suits brought against them in the US by state/local governments for not providing services to gay marriages, even though this was against the provider's religious beliefs. There have been other overt statements of hate by celebrities against Christians.

Certainly, there have been many, and continue to have many false prophets as mentioned in verse 11.

But perhaps the most remarkable verse is 14 because it declares the gospel will be preached throughout the world. Two thousand years ago this may have been hard to see because of the size of the world and multiple languages. However, today the gospel is being preached throughout the world over the radio, TV and internet in hundreds of different languages. There is hardly a person who cannot be reached with the gospel. Some people believe verse 14 happens during the Great Tribulation Period. But notice the following passage

2 Thessalonians

002:008 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

002:009 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

002:010 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

002:011 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

002:012 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

This passage seems to indicate the Anti-Christ who is to come arrives after the gospel is preached throughout the world.

A Falling Away From God

The following is part of Jesus prophecy of the last days before the Great Tribulation.

Matthew

024:011 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

024:012 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

And notice the following prophecy in verse 3. The 'falling away' refers to a falling away from God.

2 Thessalonians

002:001 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

002:002 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

002:003 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

1 Timothy

004:001 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

And again in the Gospel of Luke

Luke

018:006 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

018:007 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

018:008 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Notice that the question is raised in a way to imply the answer is 'no'. Actually, books have been written about the Great Tribulation period to come based on prophecies in the bible. This writing is not intended to go into details of that time. But there is a prophecy that group of Christians will be on the earth at that time as witnesses to the world.

Call Good Evil and Evil Good

2 Timothy

003:001 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

003:002 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

003:003 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

003:004 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

003:005 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

003:006 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

003:007 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

The above is not only a prophecy, but a warning to those who may fall into those categories. For example, we may ask ourselves, "Are we lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"?

And there is a warning of what Christians can expect.

2 Timothy

003:012 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

003:013 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

One problem that has always plagued the Church is false doctrine and heresies that crept in thru teachers who never knew God. There are even warnings of this in the Bible.

2 Timothy

004:003 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

004:004 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Jude

001:003 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

001:004 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

One example of this was the 16th century by some in the church to sell 'indulgences', teaching people they could live as they please if they buy a piece of paper excusing their behavior. We see it today in many forms. Some churches deny the correctness of the bible and say we should only accept what is 'reasonable' to believe in the bible. Or by cherry picking verses to support a certain philosophy.

1 John

004:001 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

004:002 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

004:003 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Elijah Will Come Again

Malachi

004:005 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

004:006 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Israeli Nation Brought Back

This prophecy seems to occur in 2 parts. First the nation is brought back. Then it is filled with God's Spirit. See also Deuteronomy chapter 30 listed in the section after the Great Tribulation Period. It is related to this passage.

Ezekiel

037:001 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,

037:002 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

037:003 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.

037:004 Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

037:005 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

037:006 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

037:007 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

037:008 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

037:009 Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

037:010 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

037:011 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

037:012 Therefore prophecy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

037:013 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,

037:014 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.

The Rapture

This was discussed previously.

Sealing of 144,000 Witnesses

God does not leave the world without any witnesses. 144,000 are 'sealed' are not removed in the rapture and remain on the earth as witnesses, 'sealed' or protected from harm.

This seems to occur between the 6th and 7th seals mentioned in Revelations 6-8.

Revelation

007:001 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

007:002 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

007:003 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

007:004 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

007:005 Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.

007:006 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.

007:007 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.

007:008 Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand

Future Of Israel

There is a long passage starting in Ezekiel chapter 34 verse 11 which talks about God gathering up the scattered Israelis and returning them to Palestine. The following is an interesting passage which says David will become a prince or ruler among them.

Ezekiel

034:023 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.

034:024 And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it.

In the future, Israel will turn back to God.

Ezekiel

036:026 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

036:027 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

036:028 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

036:029 I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you.

And in the future, the desolate land will be fertile.

Ezekiel

036:034 And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by.

036:035 And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited.

The following is the prophecy of the Valley of Dry Bones. This prophecy talks about the restoration of the nation of Israel. When the prophecy was given, many of the Israelis were scattered. And in the years after this prophecy was given, more were scattered. The prophecy starts with God showing Ezekiel a valley with bones scattered throughout it. They were very dry and dead. These bones refer to the scattered Israelis. And they were spiritually dead.

Ezekiel

037:001 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,

037:002 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

037:003 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.

In the next series of verses of the prophecy, the bones are brought together and flesh is placed on them to form people. But the people are still very dead. This refers to them being spiritually dead. These verses refer to the Israelis being returned to the land of Palistine. They were scattered dry bones (or scattered people), spiritually dead. They then return to the land and reform the nation of Israel in Palistine. (This is the meaning of the bones being put together and flesh being placed on them.) But they are still spiritually dead. This is the current state of the nation of Israel.

Ezekiel

037:004 Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

037:005 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

037:006 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

037:007 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

037:008 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

And some day, God states the nation of Israel will become spiritually alive.

Ezekiel

037:009 Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

037:010 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

The following is the end of the prophecy, which clarifies the earlier verses.

Ezekiel

037:011 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

037:012 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

037:013 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,

037:014 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.

And again

Ezekiel

037:021 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:

- 037:022 And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.
- 037:023 Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: So, shall they be my people, and I will be their God.
- 037:024 And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.
- 037:025 And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.

Great Tribulation

These notes are not going into the Great Tribulation period in detail. That study can take up an entire book by itself. But it is important to note here that God states there will be a Great Tribulation period which will affect all of the earth. The time frame is this

The churches fall into apostasy.

Most the remaining real Christians will be removed from the earth. However, 144,000 real Christians will remain.

The Great Tribulation period will last 7 years.

For the first 3.5 years, there will be peace. The anti-Christ will rule.

For the last 3.5 years, there will be war. About half of the world's population will die.

Things are So, bad at the end of these 7 years, all people will be on the verge of death.

At the end of the 7 year Great Tribulation period, Jesus will return. He will cast out those which did not turn to Him.

Jesus will reign on earth for 1,000 years.

There have been several prophets which prophesied of a time called the Great Tribulation Period when God would punish the world for turning its back on Him. Prior to that period, people in the world become more corrupt. The Church falls into apostacy. Fewer people believe in the one true God. The following passages are some general prophecies of the Great Tribulation Period, also known as the Day of the Lord.

Daniel

- 012:001 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

Ezekiel

- 030:001 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,
- 030:002 Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Howl ye, Woe worth the day!
- 030:003 For the day is near, even the day of the LORD is near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen.

Isaiah

- 013:006 Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.
- 013:007 Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt:
- 013:008 And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames.

- 013:009 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.
- 013:010 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.
- 013:011 And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.
- 013:012 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.
- 013:013 Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

Zephaniah

- 001:001 The word of the LORD which came unto Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.
- 001:002 I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the LORD.
- 001:003 I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked: and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.
- 001:004 I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests;
- 001:005 And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham;
- 001:006 And them that are turned back from the LORD; and those that have not sought the LORD, nor enquired for him.
- 001:007 Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.
- 001:008 And it shall come to pass in the day of the LORD's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.
- 001:009 In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.

Zephaniah

- 001:014 The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.
- 001:015 That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,
- 001:016 A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.
- 001:017 And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.
- 001:018 Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

Joel

- 001:015 Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

Joel

- 002:001 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand;
- 002:002 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.
- 002:003 A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

Joel

- 002:010 The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:
- 002:011 And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?
- 002:012 Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:
- 002:013 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

Zechariah

- 014:001 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.
- 014:002 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.
- 014:003 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.
- 014:004 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.
- 014:005 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.
- 014:006 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark:
- 014:007 But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.
- 014:008 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.
- 014:009 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.
- 014:010 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.
- 014:011 And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.
- 014:012 And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

- 014:013 And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.
- 014:014 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.
- 014:015 And So, shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.
- 014:016 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.
- 014:017 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.
- 014:018 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.
- 014:019 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.
- 014:020 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.
- 014:021 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts

Malachi

- 004:001 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

2 Peter

- 003:010 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.
- 003:011 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

Daniel

- 012:011 And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.
- 012:012 Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

Prophecy of Russia Attacking Israel

The following passage is a prophecy of an attack by Russia against Israel.

The word 'Gog' is a Tartaric word means 'root' or 'man on top'. The Hebrew word for 'chief' is 'rosh'. The word 'rosh' taken as a proper name refers to Scythia, whose territory is now part of Russia.

Ezekiel

- 038:001 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

038:002 Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him,

There are other reasons to believe Gog refers to Russia. In the following passage, the prophecy states Gog is north of Israel. Russia is the great nation north of Israel

Ezekiel

038:014 Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it?

038:015 And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army:

And again, the prophecy says Gog is to the north of Israel

Ezekiel

039:002 And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel:

Notice all of the other countries joining in to attack Israel

Ezekiel

038:003 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:

038:004 And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords:

038:005 Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet:

038:006 Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee.

‘Gomer’ refers to Germany. ‘Togarmah’ refers to Turkey.

One reason given for the attack in the following passage is to take spoils of war.

Ezekiel

038:007 Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them.

038:008 After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them.

038:009 Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee.

038:010 Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought:

038:011 And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwallled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,

038:012 To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land.

038:013 Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?

But they will be destroyed by God

Ezekiel

38:021 And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother.

038:022 And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

038:023 Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Ezekiel

039:001 Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:

039:002 And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel:

Ezekiel was not the only one who prophesied of this event. Another is Zechariah. The following is one key passage.

Zechariah

012:001 The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.

012:002 Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.

012:003 And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

012:004 In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.

Notice verse Zechariah 12:3 above states, "all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces". That means Israel is only a burden for those that want it to be a burden for them (ie, only for those who want to be involved)

There are more details in this chapter. Some of the more interesting ones are in verses 8-10. Notice the reference to Jesus's crucifixion in verse 10.

Zechariah

012:008 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

012:009 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

012:010 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

Zechariah chapter 14 gives more details.

Zechariah

014:001 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

014:002 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

014:003 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

There are several places in the Bible which prophecy of Christ's 1000 year rule of the earth after the events in Zechariah 14:1-3. The following is one of these passages.

Zechariah

014:009 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

014:010 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

014:011 And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

014:012 And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

014:013 And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

014:014 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.

014:015 And So, shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.

014:016 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

014:017 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

014:018 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

014:019 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

014:020 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

014:021 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

Length of Great Tribulation Period – 7 or 3.5 Years?

The book of Daniel in the bible tells how long the Great Tribulation period will last. Rather than list just that verse, the following is the entire prophecy.

Daniel

009:024 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

009:025 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

009:026 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

009:027 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

The term 'weeks' actually is similar to the term 'dozen' because it refers to 7 of something – not necessarily 7 days. In this case, it is referring to years. So, 70 weeks is referring to 490 years. Verse 26 says that the Messiah would be 'cut off' – that is, it refers to His death, resurrection, and return to heaven. Now the last week is many years after verse 26, and is still to come. It refers to the Great Tribulation Period. So, this period lasts 7 years. This verse does not go into great detail about the events in this period. But it does split the period into 2 halves. Other prophecies make it clearer that the second half is much worse than the first half.

There are 2 different views or definitions used for 'the Great Tribulation Period'. Some say it starts when the anti-Christ first appears (the 'he' in verse 27). Others say it starts half way thru the seventh week – and say this period refers to the great judgments that occur in the last 3.5 years. So, the disagreement is simply a difference of opinion on how to define the starting point of the period. The difference of opinion is not about the substance of the period or how long the judgments will last.

People who say it is only 3.5 years sometimes point to the following passage.

Matthew

024:015 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

024:016 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

024:017 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:□

024:018 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

024:019 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

024:020 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

024:021 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Notice that this happens half way thru the 7 year period, and notice that vers 21 says this is the great tribulation.

People who say it is 7 years point to Daniel 9:27 which says the 7 years start with the coming of the anti-christ. They then sometimes point to Revelation chapter 6 which starts with the arrival of the anti-christ and lists several

punishments from God before the last 3.5 years are described starting in chapter 8. Although the punishments are not as bad in chapter 6, they still are terrible.

The Great Tribulation Period – Revelation Chapters 6-7 – Opening of Seals 1-6

The book of Revelation has a great deal to say about this period. It may be helpful going thru it passage by passage. Chapter 6 is the beginning of the prophecy.

Revelation

006:001 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

In the passage above, the Lamb, which is Jesus, opens the seals, which are His judgements on the world which rejected Him. Remember that at this point, the true Church was removed from the earth and only 144,000 believers remain on the earth along with those who rejected Him. And at this point in time, the Holy Spirit stops restraining evil in the world.

Genesis

006:003 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

In the above passage, God warns He will stop striving and instead punish.

Revelation

006:002 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Many scholars believe the above passage refers to Jesus. Others say this is the anti-christ.

Revelation

006:003 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

006:004 And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

The above passage refers to war as a punishment which comes to the earth.

Revelation

006:005 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

006:006 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

The above passage refers to suffering and famine that is world wide. It is suggested that this occurs after war. Also, notice a day's work is only enough for 1 day's food for 1 person. So, an adult could not earn enough to support a family. (Newer translations like the NIV make it clear that the passage is referring to a day's wages and 1 day worth of food for 1 person.)

Revelation

006:007 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

006:008 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The above passage refers to a fourth of the world's population dying.

Revelation

006:009 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

006:010 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?□

006:011 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

The above passage is a scene in heaven where those who killed for their faith and service to Christ ask for justice.

Below, in chapter 6 verses 12-17 is the opening of the 6th seal. Chapter 7 describes what happens after the 6th seal is opened and before the 7th seal is opened. Notice how God has evil restrained before the opening of the 7th seal.

Revelation

006:012 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

006:013 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

006:014 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

006:015 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

006:016 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

006:017 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

007:001 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

007:002 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

007:003 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

007:004 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

007:005 Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.

007:006 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.

- 007:007 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.
- 007:008 Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.
- 007:009 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;
- 007:010 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.
- 007:011 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,
- 007:012 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.
- 007:013 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?
- 007:014 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
- 007:015 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.
- 007:016 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.
- 007:017 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Chapter 6 verses 12-14 refer to natural disasters. The sun turning black and the moon as blood may refer to air pollution, perhaps dust or ash in the air. But this is just speculation. Islands moving may be the result of earthquakes and plate tectonics – showing how great and terrible they can be. Remember, this is a judgement of God upon the people of the earth who rejected Him. Then in chapter 7, we are told of 144,000 believers who are sealed as witnesses on the earth. God always leaves a witness on the earth (see Acts 14:17).

The Great Tribulation Period – Notes and Outline of Book of Revelations

The following are *notes, or outline*, on the book of Revelation. They are not a substitute for reading Revelation. Instead, the notes are an aid in understating the book. One further note before starting. In Revelation, the number 7 represents completeness of something.

Chapter 1 is an introduction.

Chapters 2 and 3 are letters to 7 different churches. But in their own way, they kind of represent the story of the church, how it evolved.

Chapters 4-5 are a view of the throne in heaven prior to opening the seals of the scroll of judgment.

It seems that chapters 6-18 discuss what will happen in the last 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation Period. Remember

Daniel

009:027 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate

Also, it seems the prophecy in Ezekiel 38 occurs around the start of the second half of this period.

Starting in chapter 7, there are 4 series of judgements. They refer to the same period. These 4 series can be explained this way. Each of the 7 series is judgment from a different perspective.

The first series (Revelation 6-7) is the 7 seals, that represent what is caused by man's activities on earth. For example, war is man's activity and it causes suffering in several ways.

The second series (Revelation 8-12) are the 7 trumpets, which is the direct activity of God.

The third series are the 7 personalities, which is the result of Satan's fight against God.

The fourth series (Revelation 15-16) are the 7 bowls of wrath, which are the final judgment by God because of man's and Satan's rebellion.

Revelation 17 is God's judgment of the Church on earth which is in apostasy, which sits on 7 hills. Note: Rome is on 7 hills.

Chapter 18 is the fall of 2 cities, the Religious Babylon and the Commercial Babylon.

Chapter 19 is the rejoicing of the destruction of Babylon, and the overthrow of the Beast (Satan) and the nations which oppose God.

Chapter 20 talks of Jesus's thousand-year reign on earth, the judgement of Satan, and the judgement of people. Those who rejected God will be judged by how they lived their lives, and what they did to determine their punishment in the afterlife. Note that this passage does not say people are judged by what they did to decide if they go to heaven or hell. That is determined by their faith. How one lives their life determines the level of punishment in hell or reward in heaven.

Chapter 21 talks of a new heaven and earth, the New Jerusalem and the bride of Christ (the church).

Chapter 22 is a kind of epilog.

Chapters 6-16 list a variety of punishments or judgements God makes on the world. They are summarized in the table below. Symbols are symbols of facts. They are symbols of the reality. Kind of like a painting which puts feeling into a scene.

	7 Seals Revelation 6-7	7 Trumpets Revelation 8-11	7 Personalities or Woes Revelation 12 (see note 4) This is kind of a behind the scenes look, or sidebar.	7 Bowls of Wrath Revelation 16
1	Rider on a White Horse	Hail mixed with blood (meteors?) and 1/3 of earth was burned up	THE WOMAN Revelation 12	"And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a

	(anti-Christ?) Revelation 6:1-2 “And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.”	Revelation 8:7 “there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up”	The woman represents the nation of Israel. See note 5	noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.”
2	Rider on red horse (war) Revelation 6:3-4 “And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword”	Mountain cast into the sea (meteor?) and 1/3 of sea life dies Revelation 8:8 “and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.”	THE RED DRAGON Revelation 12 The red dragon represents Satan. This is made clear in verse 12:9. After he is cast out of heaven during the Great Tribulation, he goes after Israel and seeks its destruction. NOTE: There are a lot of prophecies of the future of the Jewish people. Some speculate that Satan wants to destroy them to cause those prophecies to go unfulfilled. If he could do that, he could perhaps call God a liar. But that cannot happen. See note 5	“And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.”
3	Rider on black horse (famine) Revelation 6:5-6 “And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.”	Great star (meteor?) falls into rivers and springs turning them bitter. Many people die. Revelation 8:10-11 “there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter”	THE CHILD OF THE WOMAN Revelation 12:4-5 This is Jesus.	“And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and

				righteous are thy judgments.”
4	Rider on pale horse (death by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts) Revelation 6:7-8 “and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. <u>And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.</u>”	Sun and stars turn dark So, that 1/3 of stars cannot be seen and 1/3 of sunlight is lost (1/3 of day is without light) Revelation 8:12-13 “the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; So, as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise”	MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL Revelation 12:7-12 Up to this point, Satan had access to heaven. Now he is thrown out by Michael and his angels.	“And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.”
5	Call for judgment by martyrs Revelation 6:9-11 “I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed	Star (probably a reference to Satan) falls and opens an abyss, letting out locusts which afflict people and do not eat grass. Revelation 9:1-12 “a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill	THE DRAGON PERSECUTES THE WOMAN Revelation 12:6-17 This is the last half of the Great Tribulation period (1,260 days). Satan tries to kill off all Jewish people because of his hatred towards them. One reason is because Jesus came from them. Another person suggested it is because God made many promises with Israel and if Satan can eliminate all Jews, then the promises could not be fulfilled.	“And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.”

	as they were, should be fulfilled.”	them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon” See NOTE 1 below		
6	Earthquakes and Meteors? Revelation 6:12-17 “a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.And	1/3 of mankind is killed. Also, a reference to an army of 200,000,000 Revelation 9:13-21 “Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for <u>to slay the third part of men</u>. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the	THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL	“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils,

	the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places”	number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.” Revelation 11:1-14 describe the work of 2 witnesses during the first 42 months of the Great Tribulation Period. (Remember, this period runs 7 years.) This passage provides additional information on what is going on during this time. These are witnesses for God. They are hated. They are killed. They are raised. They go to heaven. See also note 3 below		working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”
7	Appeal for justice by tribulation saints. Revelation 7:1 thru 8:5	Revelation 11:15-18 “And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying,	THE 2 BEASTS – ONE OUT OF THE SEA AND ONE OUT OF THE EARTH	“And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the

	“And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake” Start of 7 trumpets	The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O LORD God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail” This begins the revealing of the 7 personalities. And this trumpet leads into the end of the Great Tribulation. People are joyful for the end of evil, and see nearing of the end of the Great Tribulation.	The beast out of the sea (Revelation 13:1-10) is an anti-christ and ruler of the reunited/restored Roman empire. It seems this beast represents both the ruler and the empire. This empire seems to be either Europe or centered in Europe. The beast out of the earth (Revelation 13:11-16) is a religious leader that leads in the worship of the first beast. He is also an anti-christ.	temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, So, mighty an earthquake, and So, great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”

NOTE 1 – There are a couple of interpretations to this swarm of locust. One is that this is a new species of the insect. They have a king and controlled by Satan or his lieutenant. One concern about that interpretation is that Proverb 30:27 says that locusts have no king. Another interpretation is that these ‘locusts’ are demons from the abyss. Notice that the passage says they come from the abyss and are released by a star that fell from heaven, which some theologians say is Satan. This is another reason why some say these are demons.

NOTE 2 – This army could be a real human army, perhaps from China or a coalition of several countries. Another interpretation is this is an army from the demonic underworld, and not human at all. Notice that when the 4th seal was opened, 1/4 of earth's population died. Then another 1/3 died when the 6th trumpet was sounded. Does this mean that $1/4 + 1/3 = 7/12$ died? Or $1/4 + (3/4 * 1/3) = 1/2$ died?

NOTE 3 – The following verses are the second WOE – part of the 6th trumpet – The 2 witnesses
Revelation

011:001 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

011:002 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

011:003 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

011:004 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

011:005 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

011:006 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

011:007 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

011:008 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

011:009 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

011:010 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

011:011 And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

011:012 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

011:013 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

011:014 The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

It is not clear who the 2 witnesses are. Some believe one is Elijah because of the following prophecy

Malachi

004:005 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

004:006 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

But notice what Jesus said.

Matthew

017:010 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

017:011 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

017:012 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

017:013 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

NOTE 4 – Chapters 12 and 13 fills in details that are missing in the other chapters. These chapters do no advance the story. Rather, they give background to the story.

NOTE 5 – In verse 1, the 12 stars represent the 12 tribes of Israel. Verse 9 makes it clear the dragon represents Satan. The seven heads represent that when Satan was created, he was the greatest of the created beings. The woman's child is Jesus. In verse 4, the stars represent angels and the third which were cast down represent the angels that were cast out of heaven for rebelling against God. The ten crowns represent kingly authority and rulership of the final division of the Roman empire?

Revelation

012:001 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

012:002 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

012:003 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

012:004 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

012:005 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

012:006 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

012:007 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

012:008 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

012:009 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

012:010 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

012:011 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

012:012 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

012:013 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

012:014 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

012:015 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

012:016 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

012:017 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Regarding verse 7, it appears a war will occur in heaven. This indicates Satan and his angels have access and are being thrown out. Remember that Job chapter 1 records part of a conversation between God and Satan indicating Satan still has access, even now. And notice in Zechariah chapter 3, it records the following

Zechariah

003:001 And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

NOTE 6 – The term ‘anti-christ’ refers to anyone who denies the deity of Jesus.

1 John

002:022 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

2 John

001:007 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Note 7 – The ‘sea’ mentioned in Revelations 13:1 refers to the world. The beast is a resurrected empire.

This first beast seems to be the same as the fourth beast in Daniel chapter 7.

Daniel

007:001 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.

007:002 Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.

007:003 And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

007:004 The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

- 007:005 And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.
- 007:006 After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.
- 007:007 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.
- 007:008 I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.
- 007:009 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.
- 007:010 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.
- 007:011 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.
- 007:012 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.
- 007:013 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.
- 007:014 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.
- 007:015 I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.
- 007:016 I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So, he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.
- 007:017 These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.
- 007:018 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.
- 007:019 Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;
- 007:020 And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.
- 007:021 I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;
- 007:022 Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.
- 007:023 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.
- 007:024 And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.
- 007:025 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.
- 007:026 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

007:027 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

007:028 Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.

Also notice that in verse 23, this beast 'shall devour the whole earth'. Notice in verses 26-27, the beast's reign/kingdom will end, and be given to those who believe in Jesus.

Regarding the first 3 beasts in Daniel represent Babylon the lion, Media Persian the bear, Greko-Macedonian the panther.

Revelation chapter 17 is God's judgement of religious Babylon, which is in Rome. Revelation chapter 18 is God's judgement of commercial Babylon. It is God's judgement of big business which denies God's authority, and unholy alliance of government and big business.

Talks of merchants that travel – not manufacturers.

Isaiah

013:019 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

013:020 It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

013:021 But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

013:022 And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

Jerimiah

050:035 A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men.

050:036 A sword is upon the liars; and they shall dote: a sword is upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed.

050:037 A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her; and they shall become as women: a sword is upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed.

050:038 A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols.

050:039 Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

050:040 As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD; So, shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.

The following are some additional passages/prophecies on the Great Tribulation. They are more vague So, they were not included before. This section could be ignored. It is included for the interested reader.

The following are some of the prophecies of the Great Tribulation period. Isaiah chapters 2-5 discusses the last days of Israel – during the Great Tribulation time which is yet to come.

Isaiah

- 002:012 For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low:
- 002:013 And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan,
- 002:014 And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up,
- 002:015 And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall,
- 002:016 And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures.
- 002:017 And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.
- 002:018 And the idols he shall utterly abolish.
- 002:019 And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.
- 002:020 In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;
- 002:021 To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.
- 002:022 Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of ?

Notice one of the judgments of God in verse 4 it to have children (or young people) rule over the country rather than the experience, wise, older people. Does this mean young people will be government leaders or does it mean young people vote people into office who share their views?

Isaiah

- 003:001 For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water.
- 003:002 The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient,
- 003:003 The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator.
- 003:004 And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.
- 003:005 And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.

Notice in verse 8 below, God once again declares His judgment against Judah because their 'tongue and doings are against the Lord'. Also note in verse 9 that God condemns their open sin. People are not hiding their sin but do it openly.

Isaiah

- 003:008 For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory.

003:009 The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

The following is an interesting verse. The term children implies people who are inexperienced and lack wisdom. The term women may refer to women or men who are effeminate – not sure which.

Isaiah

003:012 As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.

In the following passage, God compares Israel to a vineyard which He planted. But instead of producing good grapes, the vineyard, or Israel, produced wild grapes. Notice that in verse 5 God said He will remove His protection of Israel as a result. This means the nation of Israel was safe So, long as God protected it. Once God removed His protection, other nations would attack. This is a similar statement that is made in the beginning of the book of Job where the devil wanted to attack Job but could not because God maintained a 'hedge' around Job. ONE KEY LESSON IS THIS. Without God's protection, we as individuals and as nations are open to attack. With God's protection, we are safe from attack.

Isaiah

005:001 Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:

005:002 And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

005:003 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

005:004 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

005:005 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:

005:006 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

005:007 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

The end of Isaiah chapter 10 is a prophecy of the Great Tribulation period which is yet to come. We know this because the phrase 'in that day' is always used to refer to this period. The last 3.5 years of this period is a time of war and devastation.

Isaiah

010:020 And it shall come to pass **in that day**, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

010:021 The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.

In Isaiah chapter 24, there is a prophecy of the Great Tribulation period.

Isaiah

024:001 Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

024:002 And it shall be, as with the people, So, with the priest; as with the servant, So, with his master; as with the maid, So, with her mistress; as with the buyer, So, with the seller; as with the lender, So, with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, So, with the giver of usury to him.

024:003 The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word.

024:004 The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish.

024:005 The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

024:006 Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

Verses 13 and 15 refer to a remnant of people who remain on earth to testify of God.

Isaiah

024:013 When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.

024:014 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea.

024:015 Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, even the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea.

Isaiah chapters 25 and 26 refer to the Kingdom Age (or Millennium Kingdom) which comes after the Great Tribulation period.

Isaiah

028:001 Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!

028:002 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

028:003 The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet:

Isaiah

033:007 Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without: the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.

033:008 The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man.

033:009 The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.

Isaiah

034:002 For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter

Isaiah

034:008 For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

In the following passage, the Great Tribulation period is likened to a wine press and God is treading down rebellious mankind.

Isaiah

- 063:001 Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.
- 063:002 Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?
- 063:003 I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.
- 063:004 For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.
- 063:005 And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.
- 063:006 And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

Joel

- 001:015 Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.
- 001:016 Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God?
- 001:017 The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered.
- 001:018 How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate.
- 001:019 O LORD, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field.
- 001:020 The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

1 Thessalonians

- 005:001 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.
- 005:002 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord So, cometh as a thief in the night.
- 005:003 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

The following passage tells us why people who rejected Jesus will be in the Great Tribulation Period. In short, these people rejected the teaching of the Bible (verse 10). Therefore, God allowed Satan's man to deceive these people by showing them signs and wonders. Therefore, these people will believe the lies of Satan's man. We see something of this today. Today, some people hear the Gospel (the Bible's teachings) and they reject it. Then they believe the teachings of some cult no matter how silly their beliefs might be.

1 Thessalonians

- 002:008 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:
- 002:009 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,
- 002:010 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.
- 002:011 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:
- 002:012 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Predictions of Future Judgement

There are many prophecies in the Bible of a future judgement of earth by God. Old testament prophets (those who lived before Christ), by inspiration from God, propheticized this. Jesus also spoke of it. And the last prophecies of it are in the book of Revelation in the Bible.

To summarize, the organized church on earth falls further and further into apostasy. There is trouble in the world. Then God removes the remaining believers from the earth. But He leave 144,000 believers on earth – 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel who will remain and witness that Jesus is the savior. From this point, there will be a 7 year period called the Great Tribulation. The first 3.5 years will be peaceful. But the anti Christ will come. The last 3.5 years is a period of famine, disease, and war. Many will turn to Jesus in that period. Then Jesus will return to earth, case out those who reject Him, and will reign for 1000 years. At the end is the great judgement.

Revelation lists 7 ‘seals’ that will be opened during the Great Tribulation period. The following are 5 of them listing judgements on the earth.

The following passage reveals that there will be a shortage of food.

Revelation

006:005 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

006:006 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

The following reveals there will be war, and a fourth of the earth’s population will die.

Revelation

006:007 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

006:008 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The following reveals that God will avenge for killing those who were martyred.

Revelation

006:009 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

006:010 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?□

006:011 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

The following reveals what may be natural disasters.

Revelation

- 006:012 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;
- 006:013 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.
- 006:014 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.
- 006:015 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;
- 006:016 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:
- 006:017 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

The following passage reveals that some believers will remain on earth during the Great Tribulation period and they will be protected by God during that time – because the punishment is not for them.

Revelation

- 007:002 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,
- 007:003 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

Matthew

- 024:021 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.
- 024:022 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

The main point is this – God punishes for unbelief and turning from Him.

Revelations lists 7 judgements on the earth during the Great Tribulation period. The following passage lists the first 6 judgements. These are literal judgements. It may be a little difficult to imagine how they will take place. But they are literal. Much of it sounds like the judgement could be one or more meteors or 'falling stars' – or the result of one. Notice verses 9:20-21 say that after these judgements, people still do not repent. And notice what their sins are. Notice verse 20 states people worship things other than God.

Revelation

- 008:006 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.
- 008:007 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.
- 008:008 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;
- 008:009 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.
- 008:010 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;
- 008:011 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

008:012 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; So, as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

008:013 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

Revelations

009:001 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

009:002 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

009:003 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

009:004 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

009:005 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

009:006 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

009:007 And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

009:008 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

009:009 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

009:010 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

009:011 And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

009:012 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

009:013 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

009:014 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

009:015 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

009:016 And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

009:017 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

009:018 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

009:019 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

009:020 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

009:021 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

Return of Jesus At End of Great Tribulation

Removal of People From Earth – A Second Rapture

In the following passage in Luke, Jesus talks about the end of the Great Tribulation Period. In it, He states those who rejected Him will be removed from earth for judgment. Those that remain are the ones who accepted Him and are true believers.

Luke

017:020 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

017:021 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

017:022 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

017:023 And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

017:024 For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; So, shall also the Son of man be in his day.

017:025 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

017:026 And as it was in the days of Noe, So, shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

017:027 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

017:028 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

017:029 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

017:030 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

017:031 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

017:032 Remember Lot's wife.

017:033 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

017:034 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

017:035 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

017:036 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

017:037

And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said $\square$ unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

Verse 33 may be difficult for some to understand. During the Great Tribulation Period, Christians are hunted down and killed. Some people may reject the gospel for fear they will be killed by the government. These people may save their

lives on earth but will lose it to the torment of hell in the after life. Similarly, those who die in Christ will live with Him in the after life.

Verses 34-36 talk of God's removal of those who rejected Him for judgment leaving believers on earth.

Zechariah's Prophecy

Zechariah

- 012:001 The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.
- 012:002 Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.
- 012:003 And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.
- 012:004 In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.
- 012:005 And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God.
- 012:006 In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.
- 012:007 The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.
- 012:008 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.
- 012:009 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.
- 012:010 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.
- 012:011 In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.
- 012:012 And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart;
- 012:013 The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart;
- 012:014 All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.
-
- 013:001 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.
- 013:002 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.
- 013:003 And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.
- 013:004 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive:

- 013:005 But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.
- 013:006 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.
- 013:007 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.
- 013:008 And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.
- 013:009 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

Millennium Kingdom

The bible teaches that after the Great Tribulation Period, Jesus will return and reign 1000 years during which time Satan is bound and cannot interfere. Christians refer to that period as the Millennium. During this period, Jesus reigns and there is peace. After 1000 years, Satan is released for a short time to start another rebellion against God. It appears those born during the Millenium that reject Jesus will join in the rebellion. God puts down the final rebellion and then the comes the final judgment. The passage in Isaiah speaks of the peace in the Millenium. Revelations gives the sequence of events. 1 Chorinthians speaks of Jesus putting down any other rule.

Return of Israel to Canaan

Deuteronomy

- 030:001 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,
- 030:002 And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;
- 030:003 That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.
- 030:004 If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:
- 030:005 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.
- 030:006 And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.
- 030:007 And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.
- 030:008 And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.
- 030:009 And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:
- 030:010 If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

030:011 For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off.

Notice verse 3 above. Notice it says God will return and then do something. Here is another prophecy of Jesus being on earth and leaving before the time of the Millenium.

Happiness In Canaan

The following is a prophecy of the 1,000 period when Jesus shall rule over the earth.

Isaiah

035:001 The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

035:002 It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.

035:003 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

035:004 Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.

035:005 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

035:006 Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

035:007 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

035:008 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

035:009 No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:

035:010 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Jesus's Reign

1 Corinthians

015:022 For as in Adam all die, even So, in Christ shall all be made alive.

015:023 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

015:024 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

015:025 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

015:026 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

015:027 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

015:028 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

1 Corinthians

006:001 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

006:002 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

006:003 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

Isaiah

002:001 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

002:002 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

002:003 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

002:004 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

002:005 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Notice that Jerusalem will be the capital in the Millennium.

Zechariah

002:001 I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand.

002:002 Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof.

002:003 And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him,

002:004 And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein:

002:005 For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.

002:006 Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD.

002:007 Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.

002:008 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.

002:009 For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me.

002:010 Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD.

002:011 And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.

002:012 And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.

002:013 Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.

Zechariah

013:001 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

013:002 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

Zechariah

013:006 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

Zechariah

014:008 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

014:009 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

014:010 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

014:011 And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

014:012 And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

014:013 And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

014:014 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.

014:015 And So, shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.

014:016 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

014:017 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

014:018 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

014:019 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

014:020 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

014:021 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah

065:017 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

065:018 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

065:019 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

065:020 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.

065:021 And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

065:022 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

065:023 They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

065:024 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

065:025 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

1 Corinthians

015:024 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

015:025 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

015:026 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

015:027 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

015:028 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Satan Loosed At End of Millennium & Final Judgment

After the 1000-year reign of Jesus on earth, Satan will be loosed to start a final rebellion. This may sound strange at first since only believers remain on earth after Jesus returns. It seems that during the millennium, people continue to have children. And these children are not automatically believers in Jesus. So, it seems those born after Jesus's return must be taught and brought to a saving faith just like people today. But also just like today, there are people who will reject saving faith in Jesus during the millennium. It is these people who may be part of this rebellion.

Revelations

020:002 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

020:003 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

020:004 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

020:005 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

020:006 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

020:007 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

020:008 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

020:009 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

020:010 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

- 020:011 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.
- 020:012 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.
- 020:013 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.
- 020:014 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
- 020:015 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Verses 12 & 13 above is referring to those who are dead – those who rejected Jesus. These people generally believe they should be judged by their works, what they did in their lives. And Jesus will allow this. But God already declared that our works are like filthy rags to Him and we are saved thru faith. Since these people rejected faith in Jesus, they will be judged by their works to see what kind of punishment they will receive in hell.

Heaven and Earth Pass Away

2 Peter

- 003:003 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,
- 003:004 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.
- 003:005 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:
- 003:006 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:
- 003:007 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.
- 003:008 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.
- 003:009 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
- 003:010 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.
- 003:011 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,
- 003:012 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?
- 003:013 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Other References

There are other prophets which discuss “The Day of the Lord” in the bible. Obadiah and Joel are the first 2 prophets to write on the Day of the Lord. Zephaniah is the last. Below are portions of their prophecies.

Zephaniah

001:012 And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.

001:013 Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.

001:014 The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

001:015 That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

001:016 A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.

001:017 And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.

001:018 Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

002:001 Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired;

002:002 Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger come upon you.

002:003 Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger.

002:004 For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up.

002:005 Woe unto the inhabitants of the sea coast, the nation of the Cherethites! the word of the LORD is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.

002:006 And the sea coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.

002:007 And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: for the LORD their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity.

002:008 I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their border.

002:009 Therefore as I live, saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and saltpits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them.

002:010 This shall they have for their pride, because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the LORD of hosts.

002:011 The LORD will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen.

002:012 Ye Ethiopians also, ye shall be slain by my sword.

002:013 And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness.

002:014 And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds; for he shall uncover the cedar work.

002:015 This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand.

003:001 Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!

003:002 She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God.

003:003 Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow.

003:004 Her prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.

003:005 The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.

003:006 I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, So, that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.

003:007 I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; So, their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them: but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings.

003:008 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

003:009 For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.

Prophecy on Sequence of End Times

There are actually many passages on the end times. These are some of the key passages describing them in order in which they will unfold.

Matthew

024:003 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

024:004 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

024:005 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

024:006 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

024:007 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

024:008 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

024:009 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

024:010 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

024:011 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

024:012 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

024:013 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

024:014 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

024:015 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

024:016 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

024:017 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:□

024:018 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

024:019 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

024:020 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

024:021 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

024:022 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

024:023 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

024:024 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and□ shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

024:025 Behold, I have told you before.

024:026 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

024:027 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; So, shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

024:028 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

024:029 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

024:030 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

024:031 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Matthew

024:040 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

024:041 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

024:042 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

024:043 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

024:044 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

There seems to be 2 'raptures'. All the bible verses regarding them are not listed here. The purpose of this writing is not to give a thorough, detailed study in the end times. It is to provide an overview. One rapture is the removal of Christians from the earth prior to the Great Tribulation – with the exception of 144,000 who remain as witnesses. The second 'rapture' is the removal of non-Christians when Christ returns to the earth at the start of the Millenium Kingdom.

Matthew

025:031 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

025:032 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

025:033 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

025:034 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Revelation

020:001 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

020:002 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

020:003 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

020:004 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

020:005 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

020:006 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

020:007 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

- 020:008 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.
- 020:009 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.
- 020:010 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.
- 020:011 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.
- 020:012 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.
- 020:013 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.
- 020:014 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
- 020:015 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

And what is the purpose of Christ's rule? It is a time when all of the earth shall be ruled under ideal circumstances and Christ will put down all rebellion against God. But notice Matthew 20:7 above. In it, it states that Satan will be loosed again for a short time, leading a rebellion, which God puts down. It seems that during the Millenium, people will have children and they will be born with a sinful nature as has happened since the beginning. Some will turn to Jesus and be saved. Others will not.

1 Corinthians

- 015:023 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.
- 015:024 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.
- 015:025 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.
- 015:026 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

The following passages refer to the time after the Millennium Kingdom.

Daniel

- 002:044 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Daniel

- 007:013 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.
- 007:014 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

WHY TALK ABOUT THE END TIMES? BECAUSE IT IS ANOTHER TEACHING ABOUT GOD'S JUDGEMENTS ON A REBELLIOUS WORLD. Think about it. These prophecies tell how God will judge a rebellious world.

Isaiah

053:006 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way

The following is another passage about the great tribulation period. Why? For the rejection of God.

Isaiah

034:001 Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it.

034:002 For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

034:003 Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

Notice the passage says, "all nations". If US still exists during that time, then God's wrath will be on the US also. As discussed earlier, there are many reasons why God may judge a nation. For example, God judged Sodom and Gomorrah for their lack of charity and depravity. In the time of the flood, it appears God judged the world for rejecting and not believing Him. But whatever the situation is, the US along with the rest of the world will be judged by God.

There are many more prophecies on the Great Tribulation period in various books of the bible including Daniel, Ezekiel, Revelation and others. Some of them are

2 Thessalonians

002:001 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

002:002 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

002:003 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

002:004 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; So, that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

002:005 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

002:006 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

002:007 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

002:008 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

002:009 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

002:010 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

002:011 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

002:012 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

First Prophecy Of Christ's Return

In the following passage, God tells Israel that, after they have been removed from the land for disobedience, He will return them to the land. Notice especially verse 3 in which Jesus says He will return to earth and then gather them from

all nations. It should be noted that the current nation of Israel is not the fulfillment of this prophecy because most Israelis do not live in the nation of Israel and Jesus has not yet returned.

Deuteronomy

- 030:001 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,
- 030:002 And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;
- 030:003 That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, **and will return** and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.
- 030:004 If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:
- 030:005 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.
- 030:006 And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.
- 030:007 And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.
- 030:008 And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.
- 030:009 And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:
- 030:010 If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.
- 030:011 For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off.
- 030:012 It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?
- 030:013 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

Final Thoughts

Isaiah

055:008 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

055:009 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So, are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Jude

001:017 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

001:018 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

001:019 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

001:020 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

001:021 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

001:022 And of some have compassion, making a difference:

001:023 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

2 Timothy

003:001 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

003:002 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

003:003 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

003:004 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

1 Timothy

004:001 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Jesus spoke the following to his disciples.

John

015:018 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

015:019 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

015:020 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

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Prophecies of the Messiah

This section has no direct teaching about government and citizen responsibilities. It is included because the Bible is all about the Messiah or savior. There is controversy among people as to if a savior was to come and who he might be. The following are some of the major prophecies regarding a savior, written by a variety of prophets. You probably know these passages already. They are summarized here.

There are many prophecies regarding Jesus's life. One of the most fascinating ones is the prediction of the year of his departure from Earth by the prophet Daniel. Another is the prophecy in Isaiah chapter 53. There is also a great deal of symbolism in the sacrifices God told the Jews to perform – especially at Passover – which point to a savior. I have not listed that symbolism here.

John

005:039 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me

First Prophecy of a Savior

Genesis 2

002:015 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

002:016 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

002:017 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Genesis 3 (the first prophecy to Satan, Adam & Eve)

003:015 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

There is symbolism in the following passage. Animals' lives had to be taken to cover Adam and Eve. Similarly, Jesus laid down His life to cover our sins.

Genesis

003:021 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

Symbols of Attonement

Leviticus 5

005:006 And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin.

Leviticus 17

017:011 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Hebrews 9

009:022 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

This last Bible verse from Hebrews was written after Jesus was on earth. It is a summary of the Old Testament teaching.

His Coming

Genesis 22 (to Abraham regarding the coming savior)

022:018 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Numbers 24

024:017 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

Isaiah 11

011:001 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

011:002 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

011:003 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

011:004 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Isaiah 60

060:001 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

060:002 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

060:003 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

His Birth and Who He Is

Isaiah 7

007:014 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 9

009:006 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Notice verse 6 states

A child will be born

The child will be a boy

One of His names will be "the mighty God". Note again, this prophecy states this child is God taking human form.

One of His names will be "the everlasting Father". Note in the New Testament that Jesus said if they saw Him, they saw the Father because everything He did was according to what the Father wanted.

The following prophecy also declares Him God.

Psalms 45

045:006 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

045:007 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Notice that verse 6 calls Him God. Verse 7 clarifies this by then saying God had anointed Him. So, there is a duality here. But the Bible says there is only 1 God.

Deuteronomy 6

006:004 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

How can this be? The following is part of a prayer Jesus spoke

John 17

017:022

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that ☐ they may be one, even as we are one:

017:023 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

The point is, there is one God and 3 persons in the godhead. There is no perfect analogy of God. But one imperfect analogy is that of light. If you shine a beam of red, yellow and blue light onto the same spot, you see white light – three yet one. Another analogy is that of a 3 leaf clover. When Jesus spoke of people being one with Him, he used the analogy of a vine with many branches. So, long as the branch was in the vine, it had life. If the branch is cut off, it withers and dies. So, it is with life with God.

Prophecy of Being Born In Bethlehem

Micah 5

005:002 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Prophecy of the Wise Men

When Jesus was born, shepherds came and worshipped Him that night. Several months later, wise men from the east came and worshipped Him. The following is a prophecy of the coming of the wise men.

Isaiah 60

060:006 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.

Prophecy of King Herod's Killing of Children (to kill Jesus after his birth)

Jeremiah 31

031:015 Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.

Prophecy of Jesus Returning From Egypt

Hosea

011:001 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

Prophecy of Jesus Early Life

In a casual reading of this psalm, it may not be clear that it is about Jesus. But we know it is about him because John 15:25 quote Jesus saying this passage (Psalm 69:4) refers to Himself. In particular,

John

015:025 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

This psalm is the pain Jesus felt as He grew up.

A few special notes:

Verse 5 refers to Jesus dying for the sins of all people

Verses 7 and 8 refer to Jesus pain because He was seen as a bastard – the son of an unknown man. Even the other children of Mary and Joseph did not want to associate with Him.

Verse 12 shows His birth was seen as an open scandal. Those at the gate may refer to judges because that is where they sat. And the drunkards ridiculed Him for having an unknown father. In today's society, children of unwed mothers are not treated this way. But things were different, even in the 20th century.

Verse 15 refers to Jesus resurrection after His death

Verse 21 refers to Jesus being given vinegar to drink when He was crucified.

There are other references too. These are highlighted to show prophecies of His life.

Psalms

069:001 Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul.

069:002 I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

069:003 I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

069:004 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.

069:005 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.

069:006 Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.

069:007 Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face.

069:008 I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

069:009 For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

069:010 When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

069:011 I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them.

069:012 They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards.

069:013 But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

069:014 Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

069:015 Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

069:016 Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

069:017 And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily.

069:018 Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies.

069:019 Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee.

069:020 Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.

069:021 They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

069:022 Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.

069:023 Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.

069:024 Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.

069:025 Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents.

069:026 For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded.

069:027 Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness.

069:028 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

069:029 But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.

069:030 I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

069:031 This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

069:032 The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.

069:033 For the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not his prisoners.

069:034 Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein.

069:035 For God will save Zion, and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.

069:036 The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

Isaiah

053:002 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

053:003 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Prophecy on Being Rejected

Isaiah

049:007 Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

Psalms

118:022 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

The following verses, written after Jesus ascension to heaven, confirm that Psalm 118 verse 22 refers to Him.

Acts

004:010 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

004:011 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

Daniel's Prophecy on Exact Year of Jesus Death/Resurrection

The prophet Daniel had a vision which gives the year in which the Messiah would come. In this vision, Daniel was told that the Messiah would come in 70 years after the rebuilding of Jerusalem. But it should be noted that the term "week" is like the term "dozen". Just like the term "dozen" means 12 of something, the term "week" means 7 of something. A "week" could mean 7 days, or 7 people, or 7 coins, etc. But in this context, it means 7 years. So, in Daniel, the 70 "weeks" means 490 years.

The following is the passage.

Daniel 9

009:020 And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God;

009:021 Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.

009:022 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.

009:023 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

009:024 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

009:025 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

009:026 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

009:027 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

So when did the 70 weeks start? The book of Ezra starts up about 70 years after the book of 2 Chronicles – after the 70 years Babylonian captivity. The return by Ezra takes place about 50 years after Zerubable. Nehemiah returns about 15 years after Ezra. The 70 weeks of Daniel begin with Nehemiah because that is the time of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. The decree of Cyrus was in 536BC per Ezra 1:1-4.

Ezra 1

001:001 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

001:002 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

001:003 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

001:004 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.

The decree of Artaxerxes was given in 445BC, the 20th year of his reign per Nehemiah

Nehemiah

002:001 And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.

002:002 Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,

002:003 And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

002:004 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So, I prayed to the God of heaven.

002:005 And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

002:006 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So, it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

002:007 Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

002:008 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

So the first 7 weeks end in 397BC (445BC minus 49 years, 49 years being 7 weeks times 7 years per week).

So there are 49 years (7 weeks) until the city of Jerusalem is rebuild. And it will be rebuilt in troublesome times. And another 434 weeks (32 weeks) until the Messiah dies.

Notice in Daniel 9 verses 25 & 26, there are a total of 69 weeks (or 69 weeks x 7 years per week = 483 years) up to the time the Messiah is cut off. That is 445 BC plus 483 years = 29 AD (because there is no 0 AD). Jesus was actually born in 4 BC and lived 33 years and died and resurrected in 29 AD.

The 70th week of Daniel actually refers to the 7 years of the Great Tribulation period which will end with Jesus' return to the earth.

Prophecy of His Death

Genesis

003:015 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The following is perhaps the most descriptive of the prophecies!

Isaiah 53

053:001 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

- 053:002 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.
- 053:003 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
- 053:004 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
- 053:005 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.
- 053:006 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.
- 053:007 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, So, he openeth not his mouth.
- 053:008 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.
- 053:009 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.
- 053:010 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
- 053:011 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.
- 053:012 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

The following prophecy details Jesus's crucifixion (see especially Psalm 22 verse 16). Please note that this was written sometime before 970BC and the first crucifixions were after 500AD. So, at the time of this writing, crucifixions had never occurred.

Psalm 22

- 022:001 My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou So, far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?
- 022:002 O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.
- 022:003 But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.
- 022:004 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.
- 022:005 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.
- 022:006 But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.
- 022:007 All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,
- 022:008 He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.
- 022:009 But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts.
- 022:010 I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.
- 022:011 Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help.
- 022:012 Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.
- 022:013 They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion.

022:014 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

022:015 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

022:016 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

022:017 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.

022:018 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

022:019 But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

022:020 Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.

022:021 Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.

022:022 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

022:023 Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

022:024 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

Zechariah 12

012:010 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

Daniel 9 KJV

009:026 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off

The NIV translation uses the term 'be put to death' instead of 'cut off'.

Prophecy of Resurrection

Isaiah 53

053:011 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

Psalms 16

016:009 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

016:010 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

The following New Testament passage of the Apostle Peter's sermon proves that Psalm 16:9-10 refers to Jesus's resurrection.

Acts

002:025 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

002:026 **Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:**

002:027 **Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.**

002:028 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

002:029 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

002:030 **Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;**

002:031 **He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.**

002:032 **This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.**

Prophecy of His Return

There are many prophecies on this topic. Some are listed below.

The first prophecy of Jesus's return is in Deuteronomy. In the following passage, God tells Israel that, after they have been removed from the land for disobedience, He will return them to the land. Notice especially verse 3 in which Jesus says He will return to earth and then gather them from all nations. It should be noted that the current nation of Israel is not the fulfillment of this prophecy because most Israelis do not live in the nation of Israel and Jesus has not yet returned.

Deuteronomy

030:001 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,

030:002 And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

030:003 That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, **and will return** and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.

Zechariah

014:001 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

014:002 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

014:003 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

014:004 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

014:005 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

014:006 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark:

014:007 But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.

014:008 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

014:009 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

Zechariah

012:010 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

Revelation

001:007 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

Matthew

024:030 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Mark

014:061 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

014:062 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Acts

001:010 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

001:011 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven