

Lesson 12 | August 22, 2021

The Problem of Evil and Suffering

Study Text: Genesis 1:29–31; 3:1–19; Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 64:6, 7; Mark 7:20–23; Romans 3:23; 5:18–21; 8:18,28, 35–39; Revelation 21:1–5

Central Truth: Despite the evil and suffering in this world, God is good.

Key Verse: Revelation 21:4

God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away (KJV).

‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (NIV).

Learning Objectives

- Provide a basic definition of sin.
- Gain a biblical perspective of pain and suffering.
- Commit to living a contented life.

Introducing the Lesson

Say: People often question the existence of a loving God because they see evil and suffering in the world. They do not understand why a loving God would allow such things. Charles Templeton turned from God because he could not understand how God allowed such things as hunger and pain. However, it is critical to keep in mind that evil and suffering came to earth because humanity rebelled against God and went the way of sin. The continued existence of evil is both a reflection of the sinfulness of this present world as well as a reminder of God’s love as He delays judgment to give opportunity for repentance.

Evil is a temporary problem. There will come a day when all suffering and injustice will no longer exist.

Opening Activity—Title

Ask: What examples can you give where the response of believers to suffering served as a testimony to others?

Say: While no one looks forward to suffering, we can probably all think of times when our response to suffering was a demonstration of our faith. It may have been a financial setback, a physical illness, or the loss of a loved one. The difference our faith makes in the way we respond to suffering and evil speaks volumes to those around us. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Americans hold more than \$1,000,000,000,000 (one trillion dollars) in credit card debt. People often go into debt because they want something that they cannot afford (as opposed to borrowing for something essential to life in a time of crisis). **Debt can reveal a lack of contentment also seen in other behaviors such as stealing, lying, coveting, and cheating. Such behaviors ultimately reflect a dissatisfaction with God.**

In today's lesson, we will look at sin and its effect on the world. **A proper perspective on suffering and pain will help Christians live contently and trust God fully.**

Part 1— Sin Brought Dysfunction

God Is Generous

Genesis 1:29–31

[Gen 1:29-31 KJV] 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which [is] upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which [is] the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein [there is] life, [I have given] every green herb for meat: and it was so. 31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, [it was] very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Say: God's generosity in providing for the needs of humankind began with Creation, and He has never stopped providing since. When sin entered the world, it sowed the seeds of discontentment, but we are wise to instead reflect on the love of God as He has provided, both then and now, for His people. Furthermore, He is preparing a wonderful eternity for us to enjoy. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

The all-knowing Creator of the universe designed the earth to be the perfect home for human beings. He provided the atmosphere that was necessary to sustain life and the resources that would allow people to have what they needed. God looked at all He created and declared that it was very good (See Genesis 1:25).

Adrian Rogers said, I heard of a man criticizing the way the Lord made things. He said, "It doesn't make sense to me. A great big oak tree only has little acorns on it, but a weak watermelon vine has to bear those heavy watermelons. It would make sense for the watermelons to be on the oak tree, and the acorns on the vine."

About that time an acorn hit him on the head, and he said, "I'm glad it wasn't a watermelon." How foolish - We don't know what God knows.

God designed an environment that would satisfy the needs of all that He created. Trees had water to drink and sun to cause their leaves to grow. He provided water and food for the fish to swim and grow. He provided air streams for the birds to soar and places for them to land and nest. **God provided for humans by allowing them to use all that He created for their benefit.** There was nothing that they lacked. Humanity should have been able to live in total contentment (verses 29–31).

Discuss

? What are some things that you might tend to complain about needlessly, and why are such complaints needless?

? What things can you observe in your life that are evidence of the generosity of God?

Humans Are Greedy

Genesis 3:1–19

[Gen 3:1-19 KJV] 1 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? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 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. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 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. 6 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. 7 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. 8 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. 9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where [art] thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I [was] naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou [wast] naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof

I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest [to be] with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What [is] this [that] thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. 14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou [art] cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 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. 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire [shall be] to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. 17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed [is] the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat [of] it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 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.

Say: When we read about all that God gave Adam and Eve, it seems inconceivable that they would become discontented. **Those of us who have given everything to our children, why do they want more?** They had everything they needed, and they had only one rule to keep. Yet, they chose to disobey that one rule. That disobedience had far-reaching consequences for all of humanity. We are still living with its consequences in profound and personal ways. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

At first, Adam and Eve lived with joy and contentment in the Garden of Eden. Life was going pretty well for them. They had all they needed, plus they had a personal relationship with God. Scripture describes it by saying that He walked among them (Genesis 3:8). However, that all changed one tragic day.

Satan entered the picture in the form of a serpent that was able to communicate. **Satan's goal was to make the humans dissatisfied with what God had provided them. His plan was to make the people feel like God had not given them everything that they deserved. Simply put, he undermined their trust in God. Satan planted a seed of doubt about God's goodness in the heart of Eve How does he use this trick today?** (Genesis 3:1–5).

God had given human beings as stewards of all that He had made. They were privileged to be able to enjoy what God had made. The only stipulation was that they avoid a particular tree in the Garden (verse 3). Instead of focusing on all that God had given them, Satan lured Eve to shift her focus to the one thing to which she did not have access. Having all of her needs met was no longer enough. She began to develop the sense that she did not have everything. In a sense, Eve became a greedy person whose desire was to have more. Such greed—such unholy desire—led her toward a horrible act of rebellion. However, Eve was not alone in her unwholesome desires. Adam quickly succumbed to the temptation, as well (verses 2–6). Both of them ate from the tree, against the explicit command of God.

Immediately, Adam and Eve knew that they had sinned. They could no longer look at one another in purity. They saw what moments ago had been a beautiful gift from God become something to be hidden amid the shame of nakedness. Worst of all, they began hiding from God (verses 7–8).

Thankfully, God does not give up on people when they rebel against Him. He already knew what Adam and Eve had done, yet He sought them out to question them. (When a child comes to you with chocolate on his face after you told him not to eat any sweets before dinner, you question him and he says no.) He called out to Adam. Adam’s response revealed his new sinful condition. He was now a person driven by fear (verses 9–11).

God’s response to Adam reminds us that God will not overlook sin. He questioned Adam, even though He knew what had happened. First, Adam passed blame toward Eve. In the Hebrew language, this is seen in the sentence, **“The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it”** (verse 12, NIV). The structure of the sentence places emphasis on Eve as the cause (and Adam even pointed toward God as the provider of Eve).

Then Eve, in turn, blamed the serpent for her actions (verse 13). Adam and Eve wanted to deflect blame for what they did. And as a result of their actions, they were forced to suffer the consequences (verses 14–19).

Resource Packet Item 1: How Content Are You?

Distribute the survey, and give students a few minutes to reflect on it and fill it out. Discuss each of the points of contentedness mentioned, challenging students to think about why a person might feel a sense of discontent in this area. Also encourage students to ponder the personal response question during the week. Take a brief time to pray for God’s contentment to fill each student, regardless of circumstances.

Discuss

? What is the relationship between discontentment, greed, and fear in a person’s life?

? In what ways have you seen a person's life become more difficult because that person received what he or she desired rather than felt content to live with what God had provided?

Part 2— Human Nature Corrupted

Universal Sinfulness

Psalm 51:5; Isaiah 64:6–7

[Psa 51:5 KJV] 5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

[Isa 64:6-7 KJV] 6 But we are all as an unclean [thing], and all our righteousnesses [are] as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. 7 And [there is] none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

Say: As a result of the sin of Adam and Eve, all of humanity has become corrupted by sin. That corruption has led to evil and suffering in the world. **When people question why God allows suffering, it helps to remember that the source of sin is humanity's disobedience, not God's plan. Charles Templeton did not get this. He became an agnostic and walked against God the rest of his life.**

The rebellious acts of Adam and Eve served to corrupt all of humanity. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Sin has become a part of the human condition. No matter the person's religious background, sin is an active force of temptation in a person's life. As believers, we are blessed with the power of the Holy Spirit to resist temptation, yet the battle against sin will be lifelong.

King David was known as a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14). Clearly, Scripture confirms that he was a man with a deep desire to walk with God. Nevertheless, David lived with a sin-nature. Sadly, one of his greatest sins, which he tried to keep secret, was exposed for all to see. He committed adultery, and then he conspired to murder in an attempt to cover-up his original sin (see 2 Samuel 11–12).

Eventually, David's sin was made known by the prophet Nathan (2 Samuel 12). And **when David was confronted with his sin, he sought to renew his relationship with**

God. He wrote Psalm 51 as a prayer of repentance—a psalm that is cherished and beloved by many Christians still today. In the midst of that Psalm, David confessed the depth of his sinfulness, and then acknowledged his need for God’s help in order to live righteously.

[Psa 51:1-19 KJV] 1 [[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.]] Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin [is] ever before me. 4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done [this] evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, [and] be clear when thou judgest. 5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. 6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden [part] thou shalt make me to know wisdom. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; [that] the bones [which] thou hast broken may rejoice. 9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. 11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. 12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me [with thy] free spirit. 13 [Then] will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: [and] my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. 15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. 16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give [it]: thou delightest not in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God [are] a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. 18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

Today we continue to live with a sin-nature. **Obviously, we can do good things, but those actions do not justify us before God. We need to be made pure before God, which is something only God can do for us.** Isaiah stated that no matter how good we try to be, it is not good enough to please God. Once life is over and God judges our lives, no amount of good will determine our everlasting home. **Only by God’s grace can we live for Christ despite our sin-nature.**

Resource Packet Item 2: Scripture Match

Distribute the work sheet and have students read the Old Testament passages in the second column, then draw a line to the portion of the Romans passage that each one matches.

Discuss

? How did your behavior change once you became a Christian?

? Why is it sometimes hard for “good people” to understand their need for Jesus?

Sin’s Source

Mark 7:20–23; Romans 3:23; 5:18–21

[Mar 7:20-23 KJV] 20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

[Rom 3:23 KJV] 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

[Rom 5:18-21 KJV] 18 Therefore as by the offence of one [judgment came] upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one [the free gift came] upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. 20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: 21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Say: Some people think all they need to do to go to heaven is to be “good enough.” However, good behavior can never remove the sin problem. **It is impossible to meet God’s standard of holiness by sheer willpower.** The only way to do that is by accepting the gift of His Son who died on the cross to take the punishment for the sins of all humanity. Through Christ’s sacrifice, we are able to stand justified before God. That is, we are made holy by Him, and thereby fit for His presence. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Bad behavior is wrong, but it is also the symptom of the root problem. In society, it is easy to identify evil acts and to grade them as to their severity. If a person murders, he or she should go to jail for life, or face the death penalty. A person who steals from a store will probably get a fine, or worse. For many crimes in between these extremes, society puts offenders in prison to help them change their behavior when they are released back into society. San Francisco has a theft problem. Many stores are moving out. Why? Sin is not being punished.

Plato, the Greek philosopher, argued that if a society would educate the people and tell them what was evil, they would avoid it. Modern society has attempted to follow his philosophy. Some believe that if students would just listen to their teachers, we would have a civil society where evil did not exist. Yet this approach has a fatal flaw, seen in the fact that neither the penal system nor the education system has eliminated evil from our world. Jesus warned of the ineffectiveness of these approaches long ago. You do not change behavior through education. **Evil behavior is a result of an evil heart. The expression of evil may be suppressed, or even reshaped, but it will eventually emerge once again because the roots that cause the evil remain unchanged. As long as a sinful nature exists, evil will be present in a person's life. The answer to evil in the world is not more jails or more schools. The answer to the problem of evil will only be found through spiritually transformed hearts** (Mark 7:20–23). **Some of our courts recognize this. Teen Challenge and other ministries.**

The apostle Paul stated that all people have sinful roots that will produce sinful fruit (Romans 3:23). The type of sinful fruit will vary, but everyone needs to have their diseased roots transformed if evil is to be eradicated and replaced by the fruit of the Spirit which the world so desperately needs.

Evil entered the world through the selfish, sinful act of Adam and Eve in the Garden. Righteousness entered the world through the selfless, merciful act of Jesus in dying on the cross. No matter how bad a person has been in the past, the grace of God is great enough to erase sin and replace the sinful roots of the person with the righteousness of Jesus (Romans 5:18–21)..

Discuss

? How does understanding a person's sinful nature change the way you look at people who do not know Jesus?

? Why do you think some Christians continue to commit sinful behavior?

Part 3—Triumph of God's Justice

Present Suffering

Romans 8:18,28,35–39

[Rom 8:18, 28, 35-39 KJV] 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time [are] not worthy [to be compared] with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ... 28 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. ... 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? [shall] tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are

killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Say: Now we come to the “victory lap.” **We can overcome the problem of sin through the blood of Jesus Christ.** No suffering that we will endure can compare to the glory God has in store for us. Paul endured immense suffering in his own life, yet he knew that the reward to come would far outweigh any of that suffering. In 2 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV), he said, “our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.”(Share your highlights from the following text.)

To better understand the apostle Paul, we do well to study his eschatology. Paul lived his life looking to the future reward he would receive in heaven. **For him, living with a little, or even a lot, of suffering for his faith in Jesus while on earth was a small investment to make for a life of eternity with Jesus** (Romans 8:18).

Paul **learned** to trust God throughout his life. He suffered a great deal as a result of his decision to place his faith in Jesus as his Savior, his Messiah. **On many occasions, he did not know if he was going to live or if he was going to die. A lesson that he learned and taught others was that, no matter what the circumstances looked like, God could be trusted. Paul viewed himself as an instrument in the hands of God to be used any way God desired. His attitude stands in stark contrast to the attitude held by Adam and Eve in the Garden** (Romans 8:28).

Paul declared that nothing is able to separate a Christian from the love of God. Some use this verse as an argument to support the “once saved, always saved” theology. **Yet Paul was clearly declaring that if a Christian has the correct perspective on suffering and truly trusts God, there is nothing on earth powerful enough to pull a Christian away from faith in Him. No matter how bad a person’s conditions may become, the Christian can be victorious because God is greater** (Romans 8:35–39).

Discuss

? How can your view of the future help you face difficult times?

? What Scriptures give you strength and hope when you face suffering?

Future Reward

Revelation 21:1–5

[Rev 21:1-5 KJV] 1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, [and be] their God. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

Say: The ultimate contrast to the sin and suffering in this world will come in eternity; as a result, we can look at evil as a temporary problem. God created the Garden of Eden as an ideal place for Adam and Eve, but they chose to sin, bringing sin and suffering into the world. In the new heaven and new earth, the devil will no longer be able to tempt us, and there will be no sin, evil, or suffering. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

There will come a day when all suffering and injustice will no longer exist. It is in a place Scripture calls a new heaven and a new earth. Here, God will reside forever with those who have been faithful to the end and walked as His children in this life. Spending eternity with God is more than enough reward for whatever pain a Christian suffered on earth (Revelation 21:1–3).

John told the reader that God will wipe away tears. This indicates that anything that has happened in the past that caused pain will be forgotten and will never be repeated. **All aspects of the sin nature and its effect on humanity will be gone. All Christians will live in perfect contentment (Revelation 21:4).**

Jesus assures Christians of the secure future that awaits them. **Christians can trust God to care for them in this life and in the life to come. We will rest in the marvelous reality that He has made all things new (Revelation 21:5).**

Resource Packet Item 3: Decisions in Light of Eternity

Distribute the work sheet and take a few minutes to discuss it as a class or in small groups.

Discuss

? How can a proper view of the end times help you face difficult times in this world?

? What do you most look forward to in heaven?

What Is God Saying to Us?

Say: No matter how great the evil around us is, and no matter how intense our suffering is, we can be assured of God's love. He will give us the strength we need for each trial, and He assures us of an eternal home where evil and suffering will no longer exist.

Living It Out

Ministry in Action

- Look for ways to brighten a day for someone who is suffering.
- Commit your own suffering to God, and ask Him to help you see it as temporary.
- Consider eternity's values in any decisions you are making.

Daily Bible Readings

Monday:

Suffering, Though Righteous.

Job 1:1,13–22

[Job 1:1, 13-22 KJV] 1 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. ... 13 And there was a day when his sons and his daughters [were] eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: 14 And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: 15 And the Sabeans fell [upon them], and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. 16 While he [was] yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. 17 While he [was] yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. 18 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: 19 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. 20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, 21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. 22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Tuesday:

Questions About God's Justice.

Jeremiah 12:1–4,14–17

[Jer 12:1-4, 14-17 KJV] 1 Righteous [art] thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of [thy] judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? [wherefore] are all they happy that deal very treacherously? 2 Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou [art] near in their mouth, and far from their reins. 3 But thou, O LORD, knowest me: thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter. 4 How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? the beasts are consumed, and the birds; because they said, He shall not see our last end. ... 14 Thus saith the LORD against all mine evil neighbours, that touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit; Behold, I will pluck them out of their land, and pluck out the house of Judah from among them. 15 And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return, and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land. 16 And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, The LORD liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people. 17 But if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the LORD.

Wednesday:

Watch for God's Justice.
Habakkuk 1:1–5

[Hab 1:1-5 KJV] 1 The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see. 2 O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! [even] cry out unto thee [of] violence, and thou wilt not save! 3 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. 4 Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth. 5 Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for [I] will work a work in your days, [which] ye will not believe, though it be told [you].

Thursday:

Give an Account on Judgment Day.
Matthew 12:33–37

[Mat 12:33-37 KJV] 33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by [his] fruit. 34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. 36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that

men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. 37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Friday:

The Dilemma of Sin.
Romans 7:14–25

[Rom 7:14-25 KJV] 14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that [it is] good. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 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. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 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. 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 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.

Saturday:

Christ's Final Triumph.
Revelation 19:11–2

[Rev 19:11-21 KJV] 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him [was] called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes [were] as a flame of fire, and on his head [were] many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he [was] clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies [which were] in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 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. 16 And he hath on [his] vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. 17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; 18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all [men, both] free and bond, both small and great. 19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that

worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which [sword] proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.