



## 2020 2Q How to Interpret Scripture: Lesson 4 The Bible—the Authoritative Source of Our Theology

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

### SABBATH

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Read memory text: “To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” (ISA 8:20 NKJV)

What does this text mean? It means that truth about God will harmonize with Scripture the Torah and the testimony of the prophets. If people teach things that contradict with Scripture then they are not teaching truth—in other words there is not light in them.

But the lesson correctly points out that every Christian group claims that their teachings are based in Scripture, yet within Christianity there are multiple contradictory teachings.

The lesson rightly points out that this is because different groups apply different standards on how they approach, value, interpret and understand Scripture.

As you know, we take the position that Scripture is only one of three threads that God reveals His truths to us through:

Scripture teaches that God reveals Himself through His **first book—nature**:

- “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (Psalm 19:1 NIV84).
- “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse” (Romans 1:20 NIV84).

And Scripture teaches that God reveals Himself through His **second book—experiences of life**:

- “Taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalm 34:8 NIV84).
- “Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe’” (John 20:27 NIV84).

And God’s **third book**—the book that came after nature, after experience, is **Scripture**.

When we separate the three threads of Scripture we have problems:



- Science by itself leads to godlessness
- Experience by itself leads to mysticism
- Scripture by itself leads to confusion, over 40,000 different Christian groups arguing among themselves while claiming Scripture supports their view—why? Because they don't anchor their interpretations in reality, in the laws of nature and thus conjure up all types of irrational beliefs.

If we want to interpret Scripture correctly we must use the integrative evidenced-based approach which harmonizes all three threads.

One of the reasons the integrative evidence-based approach is so important is because when we seek to harmonize Scripture with science/nature—it leads away from imperialistic legal interpretations and back to design-law understanding of reality. In other words, it leads us to move from level 4 moral development to level 5 and 6.

Consider the ordinance of foot washing which some Christian groups do and some do not.

If one only uses Scripture, does not seek to harmonize with nature and experience, then one can approach this as a rule, a legal requirement.

After all, Jesus said to them after washing their feet:

You call me Teacher and Lord, and it is right that you do so, because that is what I am. I, your Lord and Teacher, have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash one another's feet. I have set an example for you, so that you will do just what I have done for you. I am telling you the truth: slaves are never greater than their master, and messengers are never greater than the one who sent them. Now that you know this truth, how happy you will be if you put it into practice! (John 13:13-17 GNT)

And some read this and hear a directive, an instruction, a task, a rule, a command and others do not and thus we have a split in Christianity as some take this as it reads, not questioning, not reasoning, not thinking, but obeying, while others don't believe this is necessary.

How does the integrative evidenced-based approach help us with this?

- In Christ's day how did He and His disciples travel? By walking
- What were the roads and pathways upon which they walked often made out of? Dirt
- And were animals traveling those roads, donkeys, horses, camels? And did the animals leave their waste? And would this be picked up by the feet?
- What footwear did they have? Sandals
- What would happen to their feet? Terribly dirty
- Was washing the feet a religious ritual, or an actual need? A real service that provided not only hygiene, but was refreshing?



- And in Middle Eastern culture what is the foot associated with? It is associated with dirt, lowliness, worthlessness, something trampled under the feet is worthless. Thus, who washes feet the king or the servant?
- So, what is Christ teaching and revealing in His actions? Servant leadership, leadership that serves, that ministers, that uses one's energies to provide blessings to others—real world blessings, interventions that are actually needed by reality.

Where does science and experience come into play?

Science:

- First—on the point of cleanliness—is there scientific evidence that cleaning off dirt and filth helps prevent disease and promotes health?
- Second—is there brain science that shows when we act altruistically, in loving service for others that we activate higher brain circuits and calm fear circuits? Yes! this results in lower inflammatory cascades, better mental and physical health! And, does acting in this way, via the law of exertion, cause growth in these mature brain circuits of altruism, and result in growth in mature character—if done from a genuine love for others? Yes!

Experience:

- First—does experience tell you that when you are clean you are healthier? Does experience tell you that when you are healthier you are happier and more capable of fulfilling the Lord's purposes?
- Second—experience tells us that people who volunteer, when compared to those who don't volunteer, have better health, less physical disability, less dementia, and stay out of nursing homes longer than those who don't volunteer.

So, how do we put all of this together in our application today, that if we did would bring harmony and not division in Christianity?

We realize that Jesus was not setting up a rule, but was demonstrating to them how to humble themselves in loving service to each other. The law of love in action. Thus, today a person who actually follows Jesus's example might:

- Volunteer at their church to clean the bathrooms
- Volunteer to clean the home of an elderly church member or neighbor
- Volunteer, in this COVID 19 environment, to do the grocery shopping for an elderly neighbor

In other words, all acts of real-world service to others are fulfilling Jesus's instructions.

Does that mean that to have a religious foot-washing service is wrong? Not at all, it only means that it is not a legal requirement for salvation. It could be a blessing, a tool the Lord provided to help us humble our hearts, but others could do the service like the Publican's prayer, out of religious pride.



One of the founders of the SDA church wrote:

Now, having washed the disciples' feet, He said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." In these words Christ was not merely enjoining the practice of hospitality. More was meant than the washing of the feet of guests to remove the dust of travel. Christ was here instituting a religious service. By the act of our Lord this humiliating ceremony was made a consecrated ordinance. It was to be observed by the disciples, **that they might ever keep in mind His lessons of humility and service.** DA 650.2

This ordinance is Christ's appointed preparation for the sacramental service. **While pride, variance, and strife for supremacy are cherished, the heart cannot enter into fellowship with Christ.** We are not prepared to receive the communion of His body and His blood. **Therefore it was that Jesus appointed the memorial of His humiliation to be first observed.** DA 650.3

What is described here? A ritual with some magical ability, or a tool, service, that Jesus intends to be a reminder to help us reject pride, variance, strife and humble our hearts before God and in love to each other? So is the service a requirement or is the humbling of the heart the requirement?

Those who don't use the integrative evidence-based approach, and who instead read the Bible through the imposed law lens, may conclude this is a rule to follow and thus set up a regular service to wash the clean feet of their fellow church members. The ritual, done out of a sense of legal obligation makes them feel good about their own piousness—that they are more holy and right with God than those other Christians who don't do this ritual, but who perhaps are volunteering at the foodbank.

So, do you see how using the integrative approach brings harmony because it focuses on the reality to which the service was designed to help one experience. As long as one experiences that reality the service is not a legal requirement, that if you don't perform you get a sin demerit on your record in heaven. The service is understood as a helpful tool to help people remember the reality—that sin infects us all and leads to pride and we all need cleansing by Jesus.

Through the design law view we see all those who with humble hearts help others are fulfilling Christ's instructions and we don't split over ritual. We have no problem supporting those who want to conduct the ritual, but don't ostracize those who are meek and loving like Jesus but haven't found benefit in the service.

I wonder, how many Western Christians, who do practice the ceremony of foot washing, would be eager to go to a culture where people went barefoot, or wore sandals and walked on dirt roads and as they came to church would meet them at the door and wash their feet?

The lesson suggests that the problem in misunderstanding Scripture is that in various groups Scriptural interpretation is impacted by: Tradition, Experience, Culture, and Reason, when it should only be the Bible impacting how we interpret the Bible. We will examine each of these in the rest of the lesson.



The Anglican church historically used the Anglican Triad to determine truth, which was the combination of Scripture, Reason and Tradition.

John Wesley developed the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, which harmonized Scripture with Tradition, Experience and Reason.

The lesson takes the position that this should not be done, that Scripture should be used in isolation divorced from all other influences or lines of evidence. Let's examine these ideas.

## SUNDAY

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The lesson points out the problem of allowing traditions to negate, supersede, contradict and lead us away from the truth as taught in Scripture.

It gives the example of Corban practiced by the Pharisees in Christ's day. This was when a person would dedicate their assets to be given to the Temple upon their death. This precluded them from using their assets for anything other than themselves during their life. They would not use their resources to provide for their parents, thus negating the commandment to honor their mother and father.

Jesus spoke to them on a level they could understand. They were lawyers, who viewed the world through a legal lens. They misunderstood God's law as imposed and thus Jesus met them where they were and used the commandments, the law, to expose their hypocrisy.

But, was the problem Jesus exposed really about keeping the wrong rules or the wrong traditions? No! It was about selfishness operating in the heart rather than love.

The practice of Corban was a practice that legalized selfishness and allowed a person to be selfish while believing they being pious as they had dedicated their resources to the church. This led to a greater sense of spiritual pride as they were so devout they dedicated all to the church. But, in reality they were selfish, not part of God's kingdom of love. Jesus exposes this by pointing out their failure to love by failing to care for their own parents.

Some may still misunderstand what Jesus was saying. Through the human legal lens they may read this as people replacing God's legal requirement—rule—with their own and thus the problem with what these people were doing was a legal one and they are in legal trouble with God. Design law helps us understand it is about reality, the natural results of taking a false remedy.

Mark 7:6-13 from *The Remedy*:

Jesus didn't hesitate in his reply: "Isaiah got it right when he described charlatans like you — those who pretend to partake of the Remedy but instead promote spiritual poison. Just as he wrote, 'These people proclaim their love for me with their mouths, but their hearts are as far



away from love for me and my methods as they can get.<sup>7</sup> Their worship is useless, and their teachings are nothing but man-made rules.'

<sup>8</sup> "You have thrown away God's healing prescription and are promoting a counterfeit cocktail of dos and don'ts thought up by men."

<sup>9</sup> He continued, "You have perfected the art of throwing away God's healing prescription and replacing it with your own worthless traditions!<sup>10</sup> For Moses taught God's Remedy, 'Love your father and your mother,' and 'Anyone who fails to love their father or mother will certainly die.'<sup>11</sup> But you come along with your own rules — which are the poison of selfishness — and throw out God's prescription of love when you say that if a person says to their father or mother: 'Whatever help I might otherwise give to you it is now Corban (that is, the resources are designated for the Temple),'<sup>12</sup> then you excuse their responsibility to love and provide for their parents.<sup>13</sup> This is just one example of how you make God's healing Remedy useless by replacing it with your worthless traditions handed down through the generations. You do many things just like that."

God's plan is about healing us and what God asks us to do has real world practical application in our lives, in our hearts and minds. The Integrative Evidence-Based approach, which harmonizes Scripture with science/nature and experience leads us to understand Scripture correctly. But divorcing Scripture from nature and experience leads to superstition, confusion, legal ritualistic religious practices that often make no sense.

One of the traditions that has crept into the SDA church that we must reject is the tradition that Scripture is to be used alone, divorced from science and experience. We must integrate Scripture with God's other evidentiary threads if we want to find God's truth.

Let's examine some Christian traditions. We will find some harmonize with the Bible, some contradict it and others do neither. And consider, which of the traditions have actual salvation significance?

There are some traditions that are consistent with Scripture and some are not—but even between these, how many are salvation issues—i.e. the tradition will separate the saved from the lost?

- Using musical instruments or not in worship at church
- Baptism by immersion or sprinkling
- Attending church on Sabbath or Sunday or Wednesday evening
- Elevating the Priest or Pastor on a platform above the congregation
- Having sermons in which the audience does not participate
- Having special music
- Having a church building owned by a denomination
- Having denominations
- Ordaining pastors or priests as a separate spiritual class from church members
- Having ordination of men and not women or ordaining both
- Celibacy of the priesthood or married pastors and priests
- Children's story during the worship service



- Passing a collection plate for tithes and offerings during the worship service

How many denominational divisions do we have because of one or more of these traditions?

How many of these are actually essential to salvation? If any of these are not essential to salvation then why are we divided over them?

Because of imperial law thinking—if we think through design law lenses then if something isn't out of harmony with God's design law we don't divide over it.

For instance, in the health care field, operating upon the laws of health, if some people insist that in order to be healthy they must wear red sweaters, we don't care—let them. We present the truth that we find no evidence of benefit for red sweaters, but we find no harm so if some want to wear them, please do. This would be like Romans 14, let every person be fully persuaded in their own mind. But if they insist that health is promoted by smoking cigarettes then we oppose them with the truth—evidence and facts. We still leave them individually free, but we don't ignore the violation of God's design laws of health, and we would not allow them to promote smoking in our fellowship. The violation of God's design law would be a point of division and if some refused to harmonize a point for separation.

In Christianity, many people argue over things that don't really matter and miss what does.

## MONDAY

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The lesson is about experience, and I really like how the lesson focuses upon our need to personally experience God—His goodness—for ourselves. This is exactly correct.

They also point out that experience needs to be harmonized with Scripture—again this is exactly correct.

But this goes both ways, not only is Scripture to inform us and shape our understanding of the experiences of life, but our experiences of life are to shape and inform our understanding of Scripture.

There is an overlap between experience and science—for science is about testable, reproducible and observable reality—in other words how we experience reality—but not on a one-time basis, but identifying the constants in our world and universe that don't change.

Consider Galileo – who observed the movement of the stars and the earth and concluded that the earth revolves around the sun, but the theologians rejected this experience and measurements and clung to their interpretation of Scripture and imprisoned Galileo.

Doesn't our understanding of Scripture have to be informed by our experience and by science? But also our experiences have to be informed by Scripture.



So, if a person experiences a supernatural event—say their dog talks to them and claims to have a message from God. Should they just believe it because they experienced it, or should they examine that message in light of Scripture and determine whether this experience was in fact from God, or from a false spirit?

How about it is not a miracle of a talking animal but a dream or an impression that they have had and they have the idea that the dream or impression was a message from God, should that experience be filtered through Scripture?

Read the last paragraph, “Experiences can be very deceiving...” No question experiences can deceive. Would that include the experience of studying the Scripture? Can people’s Bible study experience deceive them? And if so, how will studying the Bible resolve this if they are being deceived in their study of the Bible? Wouldn’t it be by requiring the Bible to harmonize with how the world actually works—testable experience and nature and science, God’s design laws?

Is there a difference between experiences and experience?

Do you want an, experienced surgeon, pilot, lifeguard—or do you want a professor who has studied academically and has a Ph.D. in the theory of medicine, flying or swimming—but has never actually done any of it?

What about with our church leaders—is it sufficient to have people with doctoral degrees in theology? Is acquiring academic degrees the same thing as being experienced in the things of God? What would give one such experience?

Actual application of God’s truth, God’s principles to their own lives and the lives of others. This is what I learned in my residency and describe in the preface to *Could It Be This Simple?* that true Biblical understanding, experience, must have real-world application and bring about real transformation and healing. Theoretical ideas are worthless in God’s kingdom if they don’t have actual healing application.

This is a problem in much of Christianity—the doctrines are often theoretical or conceptual but not practical and applicable.

Consider, our experience with God, Jesus said, “Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” (Johan 17:3 NIV84) What does this mean?

Is this knowing about God, or knowing God?

Can we study for years the biographies of famous people and learn all about them, become experts on the facts of their lives—is this the same as knowing them?

Sadly, this is what happens to many theologians—they study their entire lives to learn all the facts they can of the Bible and about God, but they never actually get to know Him. This is what the Pharisees





were like in Jesus's day—experts in the Scriptures—but when God stood among them they didn't recognize Him, because they never actually knew God.

Jesus says the same about many at the end of time, that they will claim to do all kinds of miracles in Jesus's name—but He never knew them.

Real experience is a real personal knowledge of God—you and I actually know Him, and this is knowing more than facts.

God gave us Scripture to reveal the truth about Himself to us in a real world that operates upon His design laws so that we could differentiate the truth of our Creator God from all the false legal impersonations of Him and thus enter into a real experience with Him.

## **TUESDAY**

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The lesson focuses on culture and its impact on our understanding of Scripture. It points out that the Scripture was written by people in a particular culture, to people in a particular culture.

Does this mean there are aspects of Scripture that take God's eternal truths and presents them through a cultural lens? And does that mean for us today that we can rightly remove the cultural elements as long as we retain God's eternal truths?

Can you think of any examples of how God's eternal truths were presented through the culture of the time?

What about patriarchal dominance—in other words the male domination of women? Has God's truth and design for human relationships been slanted through a culture in which men were viewed as having authority over women merely by their gender regardless of character?

Has this carried through human history so that in Christianity men are often viewed as spiritually superior to women based solely on gender without regard to character? In other words, many would accept a selfish and prideful male pastor over a Christlike female pastor?

What was God's original design for human beings? Did God create Adam and Eve with one of them subordinate to the other? Or did God create Eve from Adam's side—not from the head to rule over Adam or the foot to be ruled over by Adam—but from his side to be his companion, his equal partner—the two becoming one unit of equality bound together in love.

One of the distortions to God's creation that has happened because of sin—fear and selfishness taking root in the heart—is the loss of equality between men and women. This is moral equality, equality of value as people, equality of worth, equality under God's design laws.



But a truth often missed by people on both sides of this equality question is that God purposely did not make Adam and Eve equal in abilities. God designed and created Adam and Eve with complimentary abilities that when the two unite in godly love they become more and are capable of achieving more than either one can accomplish or be on their own.

Satan wants to corrupt God's design. Satan doesn't want equality between the sexes. Satan wants domination, subordination and exploitation. Satan also wants falsehoods, like men and women are equal in all ways, in all abilities and thus promote the lie that they can do all things equally well and don't really benefit from the union of love as God designed. Because this is inherently false, believing the lie that men and women are equal in ability continually sets up reality based conflicts that fuels the tensions between the sexes furthering the division.

God's design is a design of love—when we love each other we actually cherish, value, respect and long to promote the best in the other. There is never a desire to obstruct, denigrate, or hold down the other, but always to advance, build up, and elevate the other. We value and cherish the differences because we know as a joined couple we are elevated and ennobled as we practice God's methods of love. Thus, in God's design both men and women seek to promote the highest development of every ability in the other.

Within the church, as we come back to God's design, greater and greater equality in how we treat each other is experienced and we recognize the leading of the Holy Spirit in gifting people and thus don't put up man-made rules and traditions that obstruct the leading of the Holy Spirit, such as only men can be pastors.

Read third paragraph, "Culture, like any other facet..." When you hear judgment in this context do you hear a judicial ruling, or discernment, diagnosis, differentiating that which is actually right, reasonable and healthy from that which is not?

While we are not to judge the motives of another person's heart, we are to make judgments about what is actually healthy—absolutely, and understanding God's design and His design laws helps us do so.

Are there cultural pressures which are introducing false ideas into the world and the church which oppose God's healing and restoration to His design for life?

Let's say we had access to the fruit of the Tree of Life today—and if we gave it to a person who was blind it would cure blindness—would that be a godly thing?

What about if we gave it to a deaf person and their deafness was cured, would that be a godly thing? – You understand if we were to do this to all deaf people, curing all deafness that we would destroy a culture—that there is an entire language based on deafness. In fact, as science as pursued a cure for deafness some in the deaf community have opposed curing deafness because it will destroy the deaf community. Is deafness part of God's design? Is deafness sin? Of course not, it is a result of sin in the world, but it is not sinful to be deaf, it is just a condition that interferes with God's design for functioning.



What about if we gave people with autism the fruit of the Tree of Life and it cured the autism would that be a godly thing?

What about if we gave the fruit to people with other than heterosexual sexual identity and it restored them to heterosexual identity would that be a godly thing? If we had such a fruit today that actually did this—would it be met with joy and appreciation or hostility and rage? Why? What would it reveal if people became angry at such an opportunity?

## WEDNESDAY

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The lesson suggests that using reason to determine truth leads to rationalism and the rejection of Scripture.

Ten years ago, I had a series of meetings with a group of theologians who were opposed to what we teach at Come and Reason Ministries. One of their big objections was that we use reason to understand Scripture. One of their professors, in his paper outlining their objections wrote: “Human reason must bow before divine revelation, or we are left with rationalism.”

They argued that we cannot use our reason to understand Scripture because Scripture is divinely inspired and we are sinful and our human reason is warped and thus we must take the Bible as it reads.

Of course, I pointed out the following:

“Come now, let us reason together,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. (Is 1:18 NIV84)

One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. (Rom 14:5 NIV84)

But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Heb 5:14 NIV84)

I pointed out that God is the source of all truth—that Satan is the father of lies and that God has revealed truth in Scripture—but then God expects us to exercise our God-given reasoning power to reason through the Scriptures in order to develop by practice the ability to discern truth from error. In so doing, truth sets us free from lies, we are won to trust and our hearts and minds are cleansed in our trust relationship with God. But this doesn’t happen if we refuse to reason.

I asked how much truth does Satan have on his side of the argument and how much truth does God have? Since Satan has no truth and God has all truth, who would **not** want us to reason, who would want us just to believe without investigation, with thinking things through?



Then, since these were SDA theologians I shared some quotes with them from one of the founders of the SDA church, here is one of them:

God **never** asks us to believe, without giving **sufficient evidence** upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by **testimony that appeals to our reason**; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith. {SC 105.2}

Are we to use our reason when studying Scripture? Absolutely, but here is the point where human reason is limited and for which we need divine revelation: Because of sin, human reason alone cannot discover the truth about God, God must reveal it to us. But, once God has revealed truth through Scripture, science/nature and experience, we must exercise our reasoning ability to understand and choose the truth and reject the lies.

## **THURSDAY**

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The lesson points out that some people allow their experience, in what they believe are the movements of the Holy Spirit, to diminish the role of Scripture. In other words, they get a message they believe is from the Holy Spirit, but that message is not processed through the Scripture to determine if it is harmony with Scripture, or even worse, the message contradicts Scripture and they conclude the Spirit is leading them beyond Scripture.

The lesson rightly points out that the Holy Spirit inspired the Scripture and the eternal truths contained therein do not change. Thus, the Holy Spirit will not contradict the truths of Scripture. However, as we have pointed out earlier, there are many interpretations of Scripture, and the Holy Spirit will lead us to reject false interpretations of Scripture.

Can the Bible be rightly understood without the enlightening of the Holy Spirit? Can reading the Bible transform the heart without the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart? No!

This is why the metaphor of a lamp is so good.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Ps 119:105 NIV84)

The Scripture is the lamp, but the Holy Spirit is the oil in the lamp. A lamp without oil gives no light. Studying Scripture without the Holy Spirit does not result in truth (light) and does not result in a life that shines forth God's kingdom of love. The Scripture is useless without the Holy Spirit. In fact, the Scripture without the Holy Spirit can be a tool to cause great harm. As I have said before, there isn't much more dangerous on planet earth than someone on a mission for God who doesn't actually know Him!



The lesson, in last paragraph says, “It is not our task to sit in judgment over Scripture. The Word of God, rather, has the right and the authority to judge us and our thinking.”

Are they saying we are not to reason through the Scripture and make a judgment on whether to follow it or not? That if the Scripture gives us a directive from God, then we are not to question that directive, we are to obey?

Hmmm.... I wonder, if the lesson authors were here what they would say about Deuteronomy 14:22-27 (NIV84):

Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year. <sup>23</sup> Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the Lord your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the Lord your God always. <sup>24</sup> But if that place is too distant and you have been blessed by the Lord your God and cannot carry your tithe (because the place where the Lord will choose to put his Name is so far away), <sup>25</sup> then exchange your tithe for silver, and take the silver with you and go to the place the Lord your God will choose. <sup>26</sup> Use the silver to buy whatever you like: cattle, sheep, wine or other fermented drink, or anything you wish. Then you and your household shall eat there in the presence of the Lord your God and rejoice. <sup>27</sup> And do not neglect the Levites living in your towns, for they have no allotment or inheritance of their own.

Here we have a specific command by God to remember the Levites, God’s church leaders, with our tithes—do you think they would want us to practice this? And in the very middle of this we are told also to use our tithe to buy fermented drink and celebrate with the Lord, would they want us to practice this?

Well, we are certainly not to sit in judgment of the Scripture and we are certainly not to reason, so I guess they would have us practice this. This is only one example of many that can occur when people fail to reason and to make judgments about the Scripture.

If the Scripture is to have any benefit in our lives, must we make a judgment as to whether we believe it is the Word of God or not?

If the Scripture is to have any benefit in our lives, must we make a judgment as to what the various passages mean? If we don’t know what it means can it help us?

We were created in the image of God with the ability to think and to reason and God wants us to develop these abilities to the highest capacity possible. It is only through exercise that strength is acquired. Scripture is given to us by God as the revelation of truth and the spiritual gymnasium for our minds to read, study, and reason in order to develop by practice the ability to discern the right from the



wrong. So, yes, we are to reason and we are to examine Scripture and make judgments, but of course always with a humble heart inviting God's Spirit to enlighten and lead.

Human reason alone is the problem, human reason unsanctified is the problem, not human reason humbly surrendered to the Lord.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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**Multi-Languages:** Check out our multi-language section, it is growing every month.

**PODCAST: Come and Reason with Dr. Tim Jennings** weekly Podcast is now broadcasting, please follow us.

*The Journal of the Watcher* Video is available for FREE streaming at [comeandreason.com](http://comeandreason.com)

**SOUTH AFRICA NEWS:** *The Journal of the Watcher* and *The Heavenly Sanctuary and Investigative Judgment for the Modern World* will be available in SA after the lockdown is over, at least another two weeks.

**Power of Love Training and Equipping Course** is now available online at [comeandreason.com](http://comeandreason.com) All presentations are available video and also in MP3, the power point slides are available with and without the Come and Reason Branding logos and the Syllabus, with its reference guide and study questions is available for download. We encourage you to use this material in small group Bible studies or use the slides and present the series at your church.

**September 17-19 2020:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC National Conference in Dallas, TX

**October 3, 2020:** Come and Reason will have a one day seminar in Chattanooga TN on Healing the Mind, Recovering from Sexual Abuse, the Impact of Digital Media on Kids and more. Details coming soon.

**October 9-10, 2020:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Lakewood SDA church in Lakewood OH

**November 6-7, 2020:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at an AACC River Conference at Plano, TX. More info at <http://theriverconference.com/>