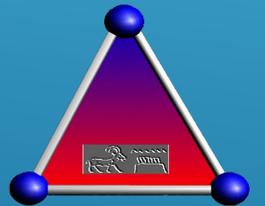


PERSPECTIVES ON PAUL

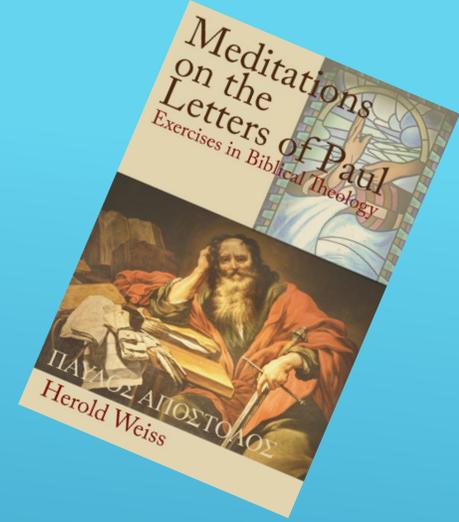
Session October 14, 2020, 6:30 PM Central Time

Discussing law in scripture.

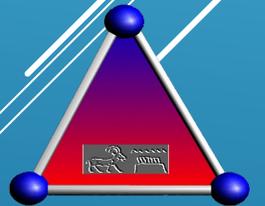


“ As far as Paul is concerned, salvation has always been dependent on god’s initiative alone, that is, on grace. It is God who calls, who loves, who justifies. It was so with Abraham and the patriarchs, and it is so to this day.

Herold Weiss, *Meditations on the Letters of Paul*, 113

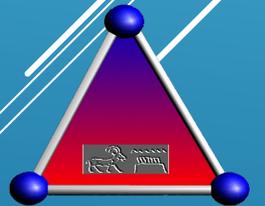


”



- ▶ Authorization
- ▶ Assignment
- ▶ Prohibition
- ▶ Permission
- ▶ Limitation

SOME FUNCTIONS OF LAW

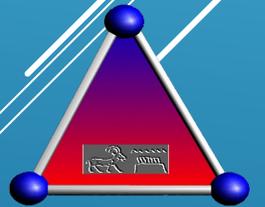
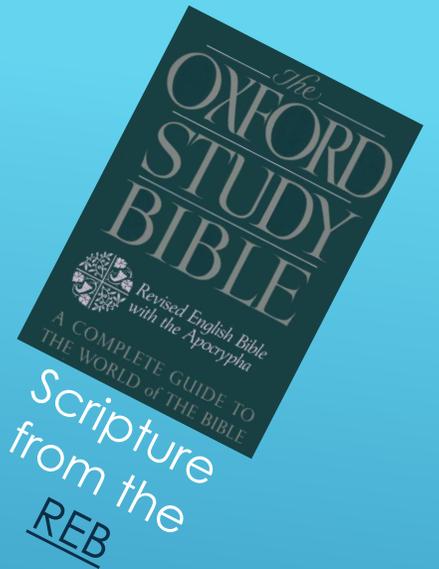


⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul.
The Lord's instruction never fails;
it makes the simple wise.

⁸ The precepts of the Lord are right
and give joy to the heart.
The commandment of the Lord is pure
and gives light to the eyes.

⁹ The fear of the Lord is unsullied; it abides for ever.
The Lord's judgements are true and righteous every one,
¹⁰ more to be desired than gold, pure gold in plenty,
sweeter than honey dripping from the comb.

¹¹ It is through them that your servant is warned;
in obeying them is great reward.
(Psalm 19:7-11)



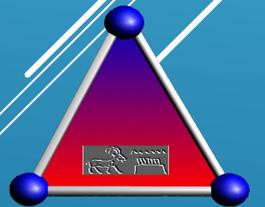
¹² Who is aware of his unwitting sins?

Cleanse me of any secret fault.

¹³ Hold back your servant also from wilful sins,
lest they get the better of me.

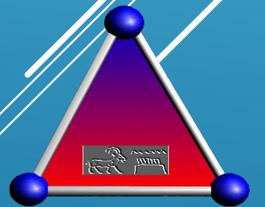
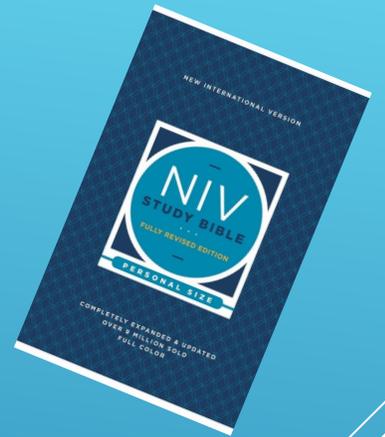
Then I shall be blameless,
innocent of grave offence.

Psalm 19:12–13 (REB)



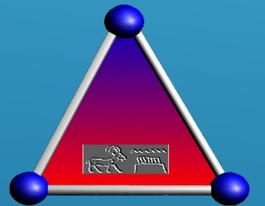
“In the OT the law was given as the way to live out a life of serving God. It included within it the stipulations for animal sacrifices for the (temporary) forgiveness of sins when people, as they inevitably did, failed to live by the law’s requirements.”

NIV Study Bible, p. 2057, commenting on Galatians 3:10-14



THE FLOOD

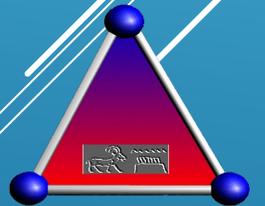
Genesis 8 - 9



Joshua said to all the people: “This is the word of the LORD God of Israel: Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods.” – Joshua 24:2

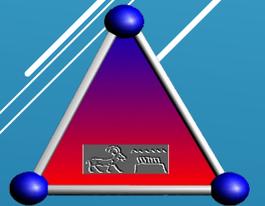
Enumeration of the history of blessings

Now hold the LORD in awe, and serve him in loyalty and truth.... – Joshua 24:14



- ▶ Genesis 12:1-3
- ▶ Genesis 15:1-6
- ▶ Genesis 17 (circumcision)

ABRAHAM



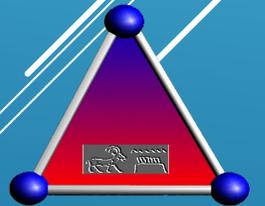
God spoke all these words:

² I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

³ You must have no other god besides me.

Exodus 20:1-3 (REB)

10 COMMANDMENTS

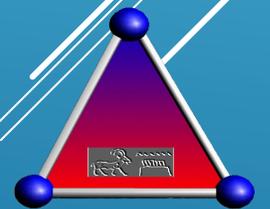


The questions around how much to give are too often reserved for “Stewardship Drives.” So we compartmentalize our giving and tuck it away for another year. In all the talk of stewardship, seldom does it go much beyond the pocketbook. Whenever stewardship is reduced to a program, something is terribly wrong, and congregations and individuals continue to struggle.

The apostle Paul revealed to us the key to successful fundraising in his appeal to the Corinthian congregation to assist in the collection he was taking up for the Jerusalem church. His formula:

³For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, ⁴begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints— ⁵and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us,... — 2 Corinthians 8:3-5

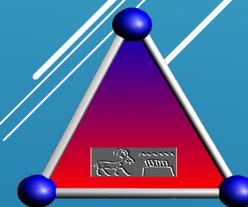
The Macedonians, in spite of their poverty, begged to give to the Jerusalem church—even beyond their means—**because they first gave themselves to the Lord.** Sure, it is possible to raise a lot of money using sophisticated methods based on psychological triggers and emotional appeals. These are too often resorted to as substitutes for the Macedonian way. A congregation that first “gives themselves to the Lord,” recognizes their stewardship partnership, and everything they do springs from that commitment. So let’s not encourage tithing, that’s about money. Let’s encourage seeing all we have as God’s and act accordingly.



³¹ The days are coming, says the Lord, when I shall establish a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, a covenant they broke, though I was patient with them, [acted as their lawful lord – HN] says the Lord. ³³ For this is the covenant I shall establish with the Israelites after those days, says the Lord: I shall set my law within them, writing it on their hearts; I shall be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ No longer need they teach one another, neighbour or brother, to know the Lord; all of them, high and low alike, will know me, says the Lord, for I shall forgive their wrongdoing, and their sin I shall call to mind no more.

- Jeremiah 31:31-34 (REB)

THE NEW COVENANT



Earning God's love by following the law ends up separating us from the grace of God. God gives us everything, but we want to justify ourselves as if the cross and resurrection never occurred. We can't nullify God's grace by our dependence on Jewish law; but we can diminish our experience of grace.

- Bruce Epperly, *Galatians: A Participatory Study Guide*, 34

