

Bible Study - Lecture IX – Part 6
Brookland Baptist Church
Wednesday, June 17, 2020
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ANTHROPODICY: has to do with or is concerned with man's inhumanity to man; the evil we do to each other. Examples: Joseph's brothers, David's children i.e. Absalom.

As we come to the close of the Bible study for the summer, I want us to stay woke to what is currently taking place in our Nation and our world. I would like to add a footnote to last week's conversation, I want to share some further examples of White Supremacist thought about Black inferiority and the Confederate flag. For those who argue that the Confederate flag is not a racist symbol, but is rather a symbol of heritage. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Let's listen to the words of William Tappan Thompson who supported the Confederacy during the American Civil War. In 1863, as the editor of the Morning News, he discussed a variant of a design that would ultimately become the Confederacy's second national flag, which would become known as the "Stainless Banner" or the "Jackson Flag" (for its first use as the flag that draped the coffin of Confederate Lt. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson).

In a series of editorials, Thompson wrote why he felt the design should be chosen to represent the Confederacy as "The White Man's Flag."

“As a people, we are fighting to maintain the heaven ordained supremacy of the white man over the inferior or colored race: a white flag would thus be emblematical of our cause.”

Now, lets us explore the history of one of the most divisive issues affecting the sports world and the world at large “The National Anthem”. To understand the full “Star-Spangled Banner” story, you have to understand the author. Francis Scott Key was an aristocrat and city prosecutor in Washington, D.C. He was like most enlightened men

at the time, not against slavery; he just thought that since blacks were mentally inferior, masters should treat them with more Christian kindness. He supported sending free blacks (not slaves) back to Africa and, with a few exceptions, was about as pro-slavery, anti-black, and anti-abolitionist as you could get at the time. Particular to note was Key's opposition to the idea of the Colonial Marines. The Marines were a battalion of runaway slaves who joined with the British Royal Army in exchange for their freedom. The Marines were not only a terrifying example of what slaves would do if given the chance, but also a repudiation of the white superiority that men like Key were so invested in.

All of these ideas and concepts came together around Aug. 24, 1814, at the Battle of Bladensburg, where Key, who was serving as a lieutenant at the time, ran into a battalion of Colonial Marines. His troops were taken to the woodshed by the very black folks he disdained, and he fled back to his home in Georgetown to lick his wounds.

Following the Battle of Baltimore on Sept. 14, 1815, against invading British forces — where the lawyer had been “dispatched by President James Madison on a mission to negotiate for the release of Dr. William Beanes, a prominent surgeon” — Key famously penned what would become our national anthem. The Star-Spangled Banner,” as most Americans know it, is only a couple of lines. In fact, if you look up the song on Google, only the most famous lyrics pop up on Page 1:

Oh say can you see,
By the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed,
At the twilight's last gleaming?

Whose broad stripes and bright stars,
Through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched,
Were so gallantly streaming.

And the rocket's red glare,
The bombs bursting in air,

Gave proof through the night,
That our flag was still there.

Oh say does that star-spangled banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

However, but no one remembers that he wrote a full third stanza decrying the former slaves who were now working for the British army:

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore,
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a Country should leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.

No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,
And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

In other words, Key was saying that the blood of all the former slaves and “hirelings” on the battlefield will wash away the pollution of the British invaders. With Key still bitter that some black soldiers got the best of him a few weeks earlier, “The Star-Spangled Banner” is as much a patriotic song as it was a blatant disregard for the black people who had the audacity to fight for their freedom. Perhaps that's why it took almost 100 years for the song to become the national anthem.

Acts of God: An act of God is generally considered an act attributed to nature without human interference. For example, damage from a tornado or a lightning strike would be considered an act of God. However, damage caused by the property owner would not be considered an act of God. Unlike disasters caused by human hands, such as tragic bombings or shocking school shootings, these occurrences would not be considered acts of God. Only disasters like those mentioned above are most likely to be referred to as an “act of God”

When we hear the words “act of God,” and think about those words the implication seems to be that God is the source or cause of the disaster. Some may even offer their opinion as to exactly why God would send or cause the natural disaster. Some of the opinions may be that the disaster was sent as punishment for some sin or to teach a lesson.

It is understandable that Christians and others who believe in an all-powerful God would either think that a disaster is something God has actually caused to happen, literally an “act of God,” or be confused as to how such a disaster could happen.

However, we must be careful here because thinking of God as the cause of the disaster may affirm the almighty power of God, but also lead some believers to another question that is whether God is really a loving God. The reasoning seems to be that if God is almighty, then God has both the power to cause a disaster and the power to keep the disaster away. How could a loving God not keep the disaster from happening?

There are others who reason that if God is truly a loving God who would not cause such a disaster, then God must not be all-powerful or at least not powerful enough to keep the disaster from happening. There are also those for whom the experience of a disaster shakes their faith that they conclude that such a devastating event can only mean that there must be no God at all.

Few believers can experience a disaster and not have it raise at least some faith questions.

Now, our prescientific ancestors believed that thunderstorms and natural disasters were works of God. They would tell us to turn off everything in the house, tell us to go somewhere be still and be quiet because God was working. My Lord, He calls me by the thunder. However, today we know that there are scientific causes of natural disasters and realize that destructive natural forces of nature are natural occurrences.

Moreover, on the other hand, what about man's role in the environment and the ecology? Climatologists have been warning us for years about the gas house effects of omissions from cars the effects smoke factories are having on the ozone layer. They have found that some oil companies were warned about the effects over 30+ years.

We polluted our water supply and polluted the oceans which supply us with food resources.

WIGIAT = Where is God in All This? Or where was God in all that?

As we probe further in this aspect of God's will there are two things we need to consider as it relates to our disappointment with God in the face of suffering, tragedy, or injustice. The first has to do with our assumptions about how God is supposed to work in our world. Namely, when God does not meet our expectations, we are disappointed, disillusioned, and confused.

Second, the way we have interpreted the message of the Bible. That is to say, we must remember that the message of the Bible is not a promise that those who believe and do good will not suffer, but the Bible shares the testimonies of those who refused to let go of their faith in the face of suffering.

Scripture references:

- **Genesis 37:12-36**
- **1 Samuel 8: 1-6**
- **Job 1:1-12**
- **Habakkuk 1:1-11**
- **Psalm 49**
- **Psalm 73**