

TIMELESS CONSEQUENCES

Amidst our preoccupied society of present day America, the word “commandment,” especially when God-given, appears to have steadily lost relevance, diluted from a national behavioral norm that formerly fostered obeisance to God’s laws. This trending elevation of sinful behavior into socially acceptable normalcy, especially the presumptive type, defined as sinning without any thought of repentance, carries eternal, negative consequences. **Timeless Consequences** discusses a range of outcomes resulting from presumptive disobedience to the Lord’s directives that will hopefully present poignant relevance, an incentive for us to improve the moral quality of our lives. Simply put if each of us continues sinning without repenting, (biblically described as “stiff-necked and stubborn”), such a course renders us ineligible to receive God’s sanctifying grace, unmerited pardon, placing us in crucial, spiritual jeopardy. None are immune to sinful consequences including our first sinning parents, Adam and Eve, whose sinful thoughts and actions unleashed consequences that forever altered human destiny on earth!

With the above in mind, I have selected five distinctly different, notable but contrasting examples from the Bible taken from times well before Yeshua’s earthly ministry, as God’s judgment regarding sin remains unvaryingly flawless, timeless. Three involve very wealthy men: King David, the rich man (unnamed), and Job, each taken from a different time, followed by a fourth example, a city, Jerusalem and a fifth, a church in Laodicea. In each example, the consequences of presumptive behavior caused massive change, some permanent, as change by sinning then and now often generated sincere regret, a value reassessment, a fresh sprouted appreciation of what God had provided in their lives prior to sinning. The old adage seems applicable here as one never fully appreciates what one has until it is taken away for a variety of reasons. All these examples involve judgment fingered by God on human actions brought to task in accordance with His divine standard, universally applied as all of us must accept God’s thoughts and actions. As humans, we can relate to temptation’s power, but regardless, must further appreciate the consequences of disobedience awaiting anyone who deliberately transgresses without repentance. Sometimes, despite our genuine repentance, God allows the effects of that given sin to manifest future grievous affects. Thus while we can seek answers, legitimately question God for understanding, we nonetheless must accept God’s absolute moral primacy to effect anything He desires upon our lives.

Each individual will be discussed separately

1. King David

With all his combination of attributes, King David would flourish during any age. From his youth, strong, handsome, athletic, intelligent, cunning, of Goliath killing fame, skilled-heroic in battle campaigns, lover of many woman—but most importantly, his character was given the highest compliment by God, “a Man after God’s own heart.” David continually, genuinely praised God, a fact certainly proved dozens of times evident through David’s often plaintive, petitioning, praise-filled psalms. Of course being human, David was not perfect: With all the battle blood carnage on his hands, he was not permitted by Yah to build the new temple. But it was David’s setup murder of patriotic Uriah the Hittite to cover up a love-child affair with Uriah’s wife, Bathsheba, detailed in 2Samuel 11, 12:1-23 that proved David’s greatest transgression that was severely frowned upon by God. David schemed to protect his reputation when he

found out that his lust had produced a pregnancy. David initially was clearly unrepentant, fully ready to forsake his own parental role for the child by facilitating Uriah's conjugal access to his wife to protect David's "honor." Later, David bitterly repented of his sin upon God sending the prophet Nathan, God's messenger, who detailed a scenario to David that related a wealthy man owning extensive flocks taking the only lamb of a tenant farmer on his land, a beloved family pet, to be slaughtered, prepared for a feast having been selfishly selected by the rich man for his guest. "You're that man!" Nathan said upon concluding his story.

God's message to David bluntly conveyed His shame, strong disapproval, with divine-added, life-altering family shattering consequences: 2 Samuel 12:7B-12. Despite God forgiving David and not outright killing him for such an act of murder, the consequences as stated for such an act were not absolved.

7B I anointed you king over Israel. I rescued you from the power of Sha'ul. 8 I gave you your master's house and your master's wives to embrace. I gave you the house of Israel and the house of Judah. And if that had been too little, I would have added to you a lot more. 9 So why have you shown such contempt for the word of Adonai and done what I see as evil? You murdered Uriyah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife as your own wife; you put him to death with the sword of the people of 'Amon. 10 Now therefore, the sword will never leave your house—because you have shown contempt for me and taken the wife of Uriyah the Hitti as your own wife. 11 Here is what Adonai says: I will generate evil against you out of your household. I will take your wives before your very eyes and give them to your neighbor; he will go to bed with your wives and everyone will know about it. 12 For you did it secretly, but I will do this before all Israel in broad daylight.

David, to his credit upon hearing Nathan's story, became outraged, then immediately cut to his heart. The rush, the full magnitude of his sin, flooded guilt over him. His repentance was heart-felt-genuine: days of fasting; ashes and sackcloth to no avail were followed by quick acceptance when his prolonged petition to God failed to save his son. But the sinful consequences not only took his son's life, but a second son, David's beautiful Absalom who had been involved in a conspiracy to overthrow David's kingdom. We do not know scripturally whether David who was given virtually everything attentive to a rich life prior to this episode, formally regretted weaving his web of sin; David certainly did publically, openly grieve in utter collapsing despair in anguish over the loss of Absalom, his physically perfect, beloved son, hair-tangled-caught-defenseless, murdered, in a battle execution described in 2 Samuel 18:14; Chapter 19.

2. The rich man and the beggar, El'azer

Here in Luke 16:19-31, Yeshua uses an example of a former rich man now dead, "who used to dress in magnificent luxury" now experiencing a burning tongue in obvious torment. The rich man looked up asking Father Abraham to take pity on him by asking El'azer, a beggar in life, now also dead, who had lain at the gate of the rich man to dip the tip of his finger in water to cool the rich man's tongue. But a chasm, very deep and wide, impossible to cross gorge, separated the rich man from El'azer who now in contrast is resting cool, calm and comfortably at Abraham's side. During his difficult life, El'azer was covered with sores. 21 "He would have been glad to eat the scraps that fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores." Thus a life of ignoring a plaintive case of need, poverty at his very doorstep, finds this rich man now in unending torment, the consequences of a life-long dereliction of not tending to an obvious neighbor's basic human need.

The rich man now requests that his five brothers be contacted so they could avoid such an everlasting fate. Yeshua speaking through Abraham in this example, pointedly responds in verses 29, They have Moshe and the Prophets; they should listen to them.” But the rich man countered, . . . 30 “No, Father Abraham, they need more. If someone from the dead goes to them, they’ll repent! 31 But he replied, if they won’t listen to Moshe and the Prophets, they won’t be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

3. Job

Job becomes our third rich man but presents an entirely unique set of circumstances. With Job, his life showed no single, glaring, egregious deed that received condemnation by God through a prophet as was experienced by David, no rich man’s luxurious self-centered life that neglected to serve the needy who now suffers an eternity of excruciating heat. Instead, Job is presented with a bizarre, entirely different set of circumstances. This rich man, blessed with a beautiful family, robust health, incomparable wealth, is described as most exemplary, a man of faith with renowned, regional respect, lauded by God to the Adversary as having no equal on earth! Here we are not talking about a man that warranted either temporary or permanent punishment. Quite the opposite! Job is presented as truly remarkable with a character reference attested to by none other than God! Job is not like any other human being. “Have you seen my servant Job?” God asks the Adversary in a tone resembling how a proud parent would exude about having a child prodigy. Satan, up to his cunning self, immediately opines with snarky remarks framing that the very foundation of Job’s adoring faith is predicated on a falsehood sustained by Job of never having been tested with adversity, being hedged in, protected on all sides. Take this protection away the Adversary challenges, and watch, Job will curse you to your face! (Job 1:8; Job 2: 3A, 5B, 6A) This answer prompts a wager over the genuineness and tenacity of Job’s faith; God allows Satan to befall anything upon Job except death. Then as most all know, a life-altering, crushing calamity immediately attacks Job, his family, wealth, health — all dashed within minutes. Thus begins Job’s severest test of his life. Quite possibly, prior, as I speculate, Job’s bountiful life up to that point had been a blessing or a series of blessings bestowed on Job for his meticulous constancy in worshipping Yah.

Job’s predicament has long intrigued me. Why? To begin, first comes the undeniable fact: my own faithfulness to God has never come close to duplicating the faithful fidelity to God that Job had exemplified throughout his life. I emphasize with Job in his consternation as he defended his position of innocence when drenched in argumentative accusations of his three “friends” who erroneously assumed his guilt was evidenced by Job’s having received such profound, harsh divine-sourced punishment. At first, the “why” stoking this brutal trial placed upon Job through no conceived fault of his own appears as a conundrum to him. Then, as the agony of Job’s emotional and physical trial extends, Job’s self-righteousness begins to emerge. With nothing but time and misery on his hands, Job reviews his life, and develops a nostalgia for those halcyon days of social position and social respectability. Job, like all of us, likes attention; he was not perfect.

Job’s reaction to the events of this unearthly invasion into his life becomes universally human felt: He reeled from his loss of family and attacks of severe, unearthly sores of pain that now ravaged his body How would anyone react to such sudden calamity? Hear Job in 10: 18 “Why did you bring me out of the womb? I wish I had died there where no eye could see me. 19 I would have been as if I had never existed, I would have been carried from womb to grave.” Such events just happening with no sin-laden reason would rattle anyone. How about the loss of a child, diseases, accidents, earthquakes, storms,

other negative, horrible life-changing events with no viable reason? What would happen to our “faith of wellbeing” under such extensive attack? Take away health, all wealth, stability, would our ability to sustain our faith endure or dilute into despair? One would ask all these questions starting with what did I do to God to deserve such drastic punishment? The reader knows that Job did nothing egregious to warrant such wrathful treatment. I empathized with Job’s anger and frustration as his three “friends” pummeled him with verbal assaults that collectively, incorrectly substantiated his guilt tantamount to his terrible afflictions. Job 6:24 Teach me, and I will be silent. Make me understand how I am at fault; 26A Do you think your words (his friend’s) constitute an argument?” 16:2 I have heard this stuff so often! Such sorry comforters, all of you! 19:2 How long will you go on making me angry? 3 You’ve insulted me ten times already; aren’t you ashamed to treat me so badly?

Job in what I believe is a human response bordering on arrogance, gallantly maintained his innocence, wanting to speak, present his case to God. Job described his exalted social position, his ability to resist all types of sin, and Job’s increasing insistence to affront God, all these justifications combined to into his right to question God over the “why” of his treatment. Job in 10: 1B states “By my life (I swear), 10C I will never abandon my complaint.” Job in 13:22 continues, Then if you call, I will answer. Or let me speak, and you (God) answer me!” All this hubris evaporated as we shall later see when God personally reacts to Job, ordering Job to brace himself to answer God.

Yet through it all, Job’s respect for God continued as shown in chapter 9: 2 How can a human win a case against God? 3Whoever might want to argue with Him could not answer him one [question] in a thousand. Job continues about God’s greatness through the rest of chapter 9. Job’s insistence in being unjustly accused:10:1 By my life I swear, I will never abandon my complaint; I will speak out in my soul’s bitterness 2 I will say to God, Don’t condemn me! 13: 22 then if you call, I will answer Or let me speak, and you, answer me! 23How many crimes and sins have I committed? Make me know my transgression and sin.

Further in chapter 9, Job speaks of his enduring faith: 19: 25 But I know that my Redeemer lives, that in the end Job will rise on the dust; 26so that after my skin has been destroyed, then even without flesh, I will see God. (An indeed Job was given that privilege!) 27 I will see him for myself, my eyes, not someone else’s, will behold him. My heart grows weak inside me! But Job stresses his dogged integrity: 27: 3 that as long as my life remains in me and God’s breath is in my nostrils, 4my lips will not speak unrighteousness, or my tongue utter deceit. 5B I will keep my integrity till the day I die.

During the process of my reading Job’s complaints as he stressed his integrity and faith, it became difficult for me to pinpoint when his self-righteous attitude began to predominate. Perhaps in Chapter 29: 8 when Job speaks of “when the young men saw me they would hide themselves while the aged rose and stood; leaders refrained from speaking – they would lay their hands over their mouths 14 I clothed myself with righteousness, and it clothed itself with me 25 I chose their way [for them], sitting as chief.

The above verses relate that Job does become nostalgic for His past life prior to his ordeal with God as shown in chapters 29 and 30. These two chapters highlight Job’s tendency to become puffed up in social status while in chapter 31, the “if” chapter, Job describes a righteous attitude, self-defined, replete with examples of his not engaging in any of the sinful actions that he proudly lists. They include such topics as if Job’s eyes ever lusted for any girl, if his feet were ever seen hurrying to deceit, if his heart had followed its eyes, if the least dirt had stuck to his hands, if he ever weighed on a dishonest

scale, if his heart enticed to another woman, if he ever rejected a slave-girl's cause, held anything back from the poor, made a widow's eyes grow dim, rejected a traveler needing clothing, or anyone else needing a covering, never lifted a hand against an orphan, ever made gold his hope, rejoiced in the destruction of him who hated him, ever concealed his sins as most people do, ever abused the land by neglecting it.

This "puffed up" position shown above comes into sharp contrast to Job's final dialogue with Adonai who awesomely shows Job the incredible panoply, the complexity of his creation which no human or collection of human beings can ever fathom. Job in chapter 40: 7 is told to "Stand up like a man, and brace yourself; I (God) will ask questions; and you, give the answers! Job then answers, 4 I am too ashamed; I have nothing to say. I lay my hand over my mouth. Job 42: 2 "I know that you can do anything, that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. Job 42:3B Yes, I spoke without understanding, of wonders far beyond me, which I did not know." 5 I had heard about you with my ears, but now my eyes sees you; 6 therefore I detest (myself) and repent in dust and ashes." Job's total abasement into humility standing before God is a lesson lived for all of us.

Job's experience shows us the inscrutable, fathomless nature of God's primacy in directing our lives that often leaves us collectively speechless, mired in intellectual chaos over God's sovereign actions, all immune to time and traditions — Everything choreographed by Him from beginning to end, directing us through creation with God's will boundlessly loving us. A divine love, free of any constraints that the human mind might impose on it to degrade it. A tendency shown by our historic propensity to instill upon ourselves a false humanistic purity of thought already doomed because of its ungodly enslavement to self-consuming satanic mores. Mores predestined to fall into oblivion along with this entire, corrupted present-day, world system.

Thus now makes it all the more imperative for believers to resist, overcome our sinful urges tied to frightful consequences spanning the ages that await anyone of us who continues wading neck deep in this world's godless ways. We must never kid ourselves, rationalizing that everyone else around us is enjoying themselves. Our purposed separation from the wayward world is simple: Remaining on Yah's straight and narrow path of morality leads us directly to the crown, the prize of life's race as Paul eloquently wrote about while devoting his life to achieve it. The saga of Job ended with God awarding Job: affirming his faith with concurrent removal of all those horrible conditions, his former life restored tenfold based on the caliber of Job's faith-made character. Yet Job, now forever changed, having physically witnessed seeing God, genuinely repented on the spot. He abandoned his former puffed up stature, his right to emphatically, presumptively question God about himself or any other course of action or behavior God might invoke upon humanity. Job realized his most humble place as a human being standing there in awe, renewed in loving obedience seeing the glory of our God and Father.

4. Jerusalem, and other cities in Zion as shown in other examples: Jer44:1-11; 2Kings24: 10-16; 2Kings25: 8-21.

How remarkably apropos do the cities of Zion in Amos 6 resemble our own present day "living large" lifestyles of the wealthy classes spangled throughout the world. Urban societies living in splendor, with second or third houses and/or villas in prime locations, fast cars, planes, yachts, fine wines, et al: hedonistic lifestyles with all the earthly pleasures such luxurious lives provide. Godless, amoral, all eyes completely focused on self, complacent, feeling their privilege, in their eyes remote from any threat. But soon, then as now, set to vanish.

Amos 6: 1, 3-8 1Woe to those living at ease in Zion and to those who feel complacent on the hills of Shromron, renowned men in this foremost of nations, to whom the rest of Israel come. 3You put off all thought of the evil day but hasten the reign of violence. 4You lie on beds of ivory and lounge sprawled out on your couches, dining on meat from lambs in the flock, and from calves fattened in stalls. You make up wild songs at your parties, playing the lute and inventing other instruments —[Imagining that you're] like David! 6You drink wine by the bowlful and anoint yourselves with the finest oils, but feel no grief at the ruin of Yosef. 7Therefore now they will be the first to go into exile with those being exiled, and the revelry of those who lounged, sprawling, will pass away. The Lord of Hosts swears by himself, I detest that Ya'akov is so proud, and I hate his palaces. I will hand over the city along with everything in it.

Ezekiel 5: 6-17 6Jerusalem has rebelled against my rulings and committed wickedness more than the nations, against my laws more than the countries around her; because they have rejected my rulings and not lived according to my laws. 7Therefore here is what the Lord of Hosts says; Because you have outdone the nations around you by not living according to my laws or following my rulings or even following the rules of the nations around you, 8 therefore here is what the Lord of Hosts says, I too am against you, yes, I; and I will execute judgments among you while all the nations look on. 9 Moreover, because of all your disgusting practices, I do things to you that I have never done before; and I will never do such things again. 10 Parents among you will eat their children, and children will eat their parents! I will execute judgments among you and scatter to all the winds those of you who remain. 11For, as I live, says the Lord of Hosts, because you defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things and disgusting practices, therefore I swear that I will cut you off — my eye will not spare, I will have no pity. 12A third of you will die from plague or be consumed by famine inside Jerusalem; a third will fall by the sword all around Jerusalem; and a third I will scatter to all the winds and pursue with the sword. 13In this way my anger will spend itself, my fury against them will die down, and I will be satisfied.

And this disaster in Ezekiel 9:1-10: Then Adonai cried loudly in my ears: "Summon the commanders of the city, each holding his weapons of destruction." 2At once, six men approached on the path from the upper gate, to the north, each man holding his weapon of destruction. Among them was a man clothed in linen, with a scribe's writing equipment at his waist. They entered and stood by the bronze altar. 3Then the glory of the God of Israel was made to go up over the kerub (cherub), where it had been, to the threshold of the house. He called to the man clothed in linen, who had the scribe's writing equipment at his waist. 4Adonai said to him, "Go throughout the city, through all Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of all the men who are sighing and crying over all the disgusting practices that are being committed in it." 5To the others I heard him say, "Go through the city after him and strike! Don't let your eye spare; have no pity! 6Kill old men, young men, girls, little children, women — slaughter them all! But don't go near anyone with the mark. Begin at my sanctuary." They began with the leaders in front of the house. 7Then he said to them, "Defile the house! Fill the courtyard with corpses! Get going! So they went out spreading death in the city. 8While the killing was going on, I was left alone. I fell on my face, cried, and said, "Oh Adonai Elohim! In pouring out your fury on Jerusalem, are you going to destroy everyone left in Israel?" 9Then he said to me, "The wickedness of the house of Israel and Judah is enormous, the land is full of blood and the city is full of justice denied; because they say 'Adonai has left the land, Adonai doesn't see.' But as far as I am concerned, my eye will not spare, and I will have no pity, but I will bring [the consequences of] their ways upon their own heads."

May we never experience God's fearful fury of wrath, brutal unprecedented, never-to-be-repeated again consequences, as described below in Lamentations, inflicted upon a city that for decades failed to acknowledge God's sovereignty, failed to obey HIS entreaties, direct commands from Yah to cease worshipping all types of idols, cease engaging in all types of profane fornications while forging alliances with countries in direct opposition to Yah's commands.

Lamentations 1: 1 How lonely lies the city that once thronged with people! Once great among the nations, now she is like a widow! 7 In the days of her affliction and anguish, Jerusalem remembers all the treasurers that were hers, ever since ancient times. Now her people fall into the power of the foe, and she has no one to help her; her enemies are gloating over her, mocking her desolation. 2: 17 Adonai has

done what he planned, he has fulfilled his promise, which he decreed in ancient times. He has destroyed without pity, he has let the enemy gloat over you and filled your foes with pride. 3: 8 Even when I cry out, pleading for help, he shuts out my prayer 4: 5 People who once ate only the best lie dying in the streets; those who were raised wearing purple are clawing at piles of garbage 9 those slain by the sword are better off than those who are dying of hunger; since these waste away as if pierced through, for lack of food from the fields, 10 With their own hands compassionate women have cooked their own children; their children became their food 5: 22B Prayer: Adonai, turn us back to you; and we will come back; renew our days, as they were in the past!

5. Church of Laodicea

Rev 3:15-21 15I know what you are doing: you are neither cold nor hot. How I wish you were either one or the other! 16So, because you are lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth! 17For you keep saying, I am rich, I have gotten rich, I don't need a thing! You don't know that you are the one who is wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked! 18My advice to you is to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich; and white clothing, so that you may be dressed and not have to be ashamed of your nakedness; and eye salve to rub on your eyes, so that you may see.19As for me, I rebuke and discipline everyone I love; so exert yourselves, and turn from your sins! 20Here I'm standing at the door, knocking. If someone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he will eat with me. 21I will let him who wins the victory sit with me on my throne, just as I myself also won the victory and sat down with my Father on his throne. 22Those who have ears, let them hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Laodicea's wealth came from both commercial and banking interests. Expensive black wool was marketed as well as garments and rugs. Laodicea was also famous for medical schools, bubbling hot springs in surrounding hills and eye ointments. By the time the water flowed down into the city, the water was lukewarm. The church was big and it was rich. It placed great emphasis on material wealth and considered the accumulation of wealth as the measure of their good standing with God.

The arrogance of this church to equate their many material blessings as proof they were rich in the spirit being right with God was bluntly rebuffed by the angel's charge: You're wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Thinking one is righteous when not, is factual self-righteousness. To be in the middle not engaged in doing anything, coasting through life without works is called complacency.

Living large as was described in wealthy urban societies in Israel caused individuals to backside spiritually with negative consequences. Covetousness arose to become a major component of their value system, an abomination, a spiritual death, having poisoned everyone that gladly followed that fateful path of an endless pursuit of material wealth. *[Note: This material taken from pages 26, 27, Action of Belief Ministry book entitled, "Revelation"]*

Summary —Conclusion

David committed a crime, tried to cover it up but God's messenger revealed it, David genuinely repented, and was forgiven his high crime of murder and deceit, yet negative consequences hounded him the rest of his life. The rich man, living a life ignoring the beggar's needs over a lifetime now pays the consequential price of eternal suffering. Job presents a highly righteous man having to painfully learn that he, as all humanity, remains humbled to accept whatever God gives us, and as such, we all can never legitimately "puff ourselves up" to question God's will as He alone is creator, having all authority, solely knowing how His creation must be divinely orchestrated beginning to end. For Job, happily, "poof" Job's entire life instantly restored, by multiple positive factors! All due to God's love for Job, a man of genuine faith, though flawed at times. Jerusalem and Zion at large often lived prolonged periods in total disregard of His laws and commands in a shockingly similar manner as those living in today's fabulous wealthy veneer of society.

Finally, may we wake up, heed God's warning to change our values; that we may never hear our own lamentation, our reeling from Yah's potential horrific, yet deserved consequences that this study has vividly described; how pervasive God's wrath can be, thoroughly dispatched, obliterating any current living way, strata of entrenched society, at any time he wishes. Even a prosperous, gleaming church; it is not immune! The wealthy Church at Laodacia featured believers' complacency breeding a prideful independence, immune from humility in their worship of God — thus it will receive eternal negative consequences if they do not institute change to reject the false siren of sin-laden "wealth" as their basic priority, so provided by the Adversary! Consequences! Consequences! Consequences! —The fatal choice of "IF WE DO OR NOT DO" lying within each of our hearts: To never reject our loving obedience to our Savior Yeshua, our Co-Creator, the giver of our present life and the prize of eternal life if we prove worthy.

Verse to ponder: Hebrews 10: 26, For if we deliberately continue to sin after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but only the terrifying prospect of judgment, of raging fire that will consume the enemies.

PARAGRAPH: Timeless Consequences will hopefully serve as a wakeup call for all of us. Yes all of us neatly, nearly completely wrapped up in today's age of technology that literally is restructuring our thought process, including our moral-values system. This study presents five examples of presumptive sin, defined as actions that have no regard for God's divinely imposed moral code. Tied to each of these examples that include three very wealthy persons, a city and finally a church, are the actual, varying consequences imposed on them by God. Many of these consequences are brutal, eternal, shocking.

