

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.
The Tree of Life for week ending 01/04/04.
Degeneracy and Scar Tissue of the Soul.
2 Timothy 3:1-4

As the New Year begins, we remember that holidays were designed to add capacity to life in a nation and to give people a time to think and reflect on God's blessings, and on the changes we have seen in our lives and in the world in the past year and even the last century. The last 100 years have seen major, unprecedented changes in our nation, especially in technology and our way of life (as predicted in **Dan 12:4**), and of course the intensification of the conflict between God's client nation and the evil of Islam. The coming of the new year is a reminder that in **Isa 40:31**, "*Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.*" Those of us who have faced adversity this past year can remember **Lam 3:21-28**, "*This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope [confidence]. The Lord's lovingkindnesses [grace expressions] indeed never cease [are never exhausted], for His compassions never fail. [This was said when the nation had fallen into ruins and was being taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar.] They are new [fresh] every morning; great is Your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion [inheritance],' says my soul, 'Therefore I have confidence in Him.' The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him. It is good that he waits silently for the deliverance of the Lord. It is good for a man that he should bear the yoke in his youth [vigor], when he has strength. Let him sit alone and be silent since He [God] has laid it [undeserved suffering] on him.*

Throughout the world people do not have holidays as we do, because they are not free as a nation. Many people throughout history have lost their freedom for many reasons, the most obvious being rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. So many nations throughout the world believe in a "god," but not the God of the Bible, and have fallen into terrible slavery and bondage. These include the Muslims in the Middle East and Africa, the Hindus in India, and the Buddhists in China, and the list goes on and on.

Even nations who once followed the God of the Bible have been placed in bondage. The first great client nation to God, the nation of Israel, lost its freedom on three occasions, under the administration of the fifth cycle of discipline. There have been many holocausts in history, Gentile as well as Jewish. Any group of people who continue to make negative decisions, over a period of three or four generations, inevitably come to a major national or racial disaster—the "third and fourth generation" curse. This disaster, the holocaust judgment, is the direct result of their own negative volition, not outside sources. Any body of people, whether a nation or race, must continue to rebel for three or four generations before they are overtaken by historical disaster and are destroyed. The Jews eventually lost all personal sense of destiny through their rejection of the Gospel and Bible doctrine.

This brings us to the subject of *holocausts*. "Holocaust" means devastation. It

includes all persecution of the Jews and violent expressions of anti-Semitism. We still see the evil of religion today in those who make violent expressions against the Jews, all the while quoting the Bible and talking about how to live righteously. This should not be surprising, as we are told in **2Co 11:13-14**, “*For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles [messengers] of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.*” Anti-Semitism is hostility toward the Jews on the part of a person, group, organization, or nation.

In **Gen 6:10**, “*Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*” The descendants of Shem are classified as the *Semitic* race of peoples; Semites include Akkadians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Arabs, Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Midianites, some Amenians, some Ethiopians, and Jews. The term *anti-Semitism* applies only to *Jews* as a race and nation, and not to all Semitic peoples. Anti-Semitism, therefore, is defined as intolerance, hatred, prejudice, opposition, persecution, and violence against the Jewish people. Since the Jews are a part of the angelic conflict and God still has covenants with them, Satan sponsors all anti-Semitism. Satan has two major objectives in the unfolding of anti-Semitism:

1. The *historical* objective, in which Satan sought to keep our Lord from being born, and then to kill His humanity before He reached the Cross, **Mat 26:39**. Satan obviously failed in this objective, and we see the overflow of his anger in historical anti-Semitism at the present time.
2. The *prophetical* objective, in which Satan seeks to destroy Israel before the Second Advent, so that the four unconditional covenants to Israel cannot be fulfilled.

God has put an invisible wall of fire around the Jews to preserve their race throughout all historical anti-Semitism, but the primary reason for the Jewish holocausts and their persecution is their own *degeneracy*.

1. Degeneracy is the decline from normal or superior standards to inferior or subnormal standards. We are seeing the manifestation of this in our country right now. That which is abnormal is becoming acceptable. Three generations ago, immorality was not accepted as an alternate lifestyle, and marriage was considered to be a sacred institution, rather than a slot machine hoping to hit the jackpot...and if not, try it again.
2. Degeneracy also means loss of integrity, resulting in a state of deterioration, **2Ti 3:1-4**, “*But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.*”
3. Degeneracy is the process of passing from the higher to the lower, therefore to *decline progressively*. The progressive decline of degeneracy includes three stages:
 - a. **Internal explosion**, the internal collapse or breakdown. This is an inward burst of frustration. It means that the individual collapses inwardly from external pressure. He enters into operation “blame game” and victimology.
 - b. **External explosion**, the release of inner frustration and pressure. “Explosion” is a synonym for falling apart overtly, caused by the sins of the arrogance complex.

- c. **Withdrawal** or **apostasy**, the degeneracy of declining progressively. Slowly but surely the decline takes place, resulting in the blackout of the soul and scar tissue of the soul, and therefore religious or historical degeneracy.

The Lord allows historical degeneracy to persecute religious degeneracy, as when Hitler and Nazi Germany persecuted the Jews of Europe, or when Alexander III persecuted the Jews in Russia. The **religious** degeneracy of the Jews is the decline from the superior standards of the Mosaic Law to the inferior standards of internal and external explosion and apostasy. Their **historical** degeneracy is the decline from the superior standards of establishment power and authority to the inferior standards that distort authority into tyranny, resulting in persecution. Degeneracy also occurs in Christianity when the superior standard of the predesigned plan of God is rejected, and the inferior standard of legalism, works orientation, the “dog and pony” show, or antinomianism is substituted as the Christian way of life.

In **Deu 4:19-27** and **Deu 28:63-68**, God told Israel that if she continued to rebel against Him, she would suffer more persecution than any other nation in human history. In **Jer 29**, because she rejected the word of God, Israel was told that she would be a “plague” to people wherever she went, **Jer 29:16-18**, “*For thus says the Lord concerning the king who sits on the throne of David, and concerning all the people who dwell in this city, your brothers who did not go with you into exile, thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Behold, I am sending upon them the sword, famine, and pestilence, and I will make them like split-open figs that cannot be eaten due to rotteness. And I will pursue them with the sword, with famine and with pestilence; and I will make them a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and a horror, and a hissing, and a reproach among all the nations where I have driven them.’*”

History records for us such events as the following:

- The Crusaders attacked the Jews under the pretext that they were “god killers”; in the year 1096, 12,000 Jews were killed in the Rhine-land.
- On November 1, 1290, Jews were expelled from England under penalty of hanging. They were not readmitted until 370 years later.
- In 1298, 100,000 Jews were killed in Franconia, Bavaria, and Austria.
- In September 1306, 100,000 Jews were expelled from France under the threat of death.
- In 1348, the Jews were accused of causing the black plague, and a million of them were massacred.
- On August 2, 1492, the inquisition drove 300,000 Jews out of Spain.
- From 1648-1658 about 400,000 Polish Jews were killed.
- Under Adolph Hitler, six million European Jews were butchered in concentration camps in the early 1940’s.

The Jews were not even able to return to their homeland, **Isa 5:6**, “*And I will lay it waste; it will not be pruned or hoed, but briars and thorns will come up. I will also charge the clouds to rain no rain on it.*”; **Zec 7:14**, “*But I scattered them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land is desolated behind them, so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate.*”

The Jews have suffered tremendous adversity because of the *scar tissue* in their soul. Scar tissue of the soul, also known as *hardness of the heart*, is the result of prolonged residence and function inside the cosmic system. There is a logical

retrogression in which *blackout of the soul* precedes or accompanies scar tissue of the soul. What blackout of the soul is to the *left lobe* of the soul (mind), scar tissue of the soul is to the *right lobe* (heart). It all begins with what goes into the mind, and then it ends up with what has taken place in the heart. Blackout of the soul is the believer saying “No” to doctrine, which opens a vacuum in the left lobe that draws in false concepts. Blackout of the soul then spreads like a disease and results in the right lobe disorder of scar tissue of the soul. Scar tissue of the soul has a detrimental effect on every part of the soul. It results in loss of perceptive ability in the frame of reference. The believer with scar tissue of the soul can listen to doctrine every day and still react to pressure and remain in ignorance. In his memory center, he forgets what doctrine he has learned and cannot apply doctrine, and his spiritual momentum is halted. In his vocabulary storage, all technical language related to perception and application is gradually destroyed. In his categorical storage, scar tissue of the soul destroys categorical doctrinal understanding, such as the rationales used in the faith-rest drill.

Scar tissue of the soul destroys doctrinal norms and standards, therefore wiping out the conscience. This loss of norms and standards drags the believer into the plan of Satan. Scar tissue of the soul is a guarantee of the destruction of true virtue-love, and personal love cannot survive without the integrity of impersonal love. Scar tissue of the soul is the spiritual disorder of involvement in the cosmic system, resulting in complete loss of momentum, and eventuating in the most intense discipline from God. Scar tissue of the soul can also be found in unbelievers, as when the Lord Jesus Christ called the Pharisees “blind guides” and those who followed them “blind men,” **Mat 15:11-14**, “*Not what enters into the mouth defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man.*” Then the disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?” But He answered and said, “Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be rooted up. Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit.” He said in **Mat 23:16-19**, “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obligated. You fools and blind men; which is more important, the gold, or the temple that sanctified the gold? And, ‘Whoever swears by the altar, that is nothing, but whoever swears by the offering upon it, he is obligated.’ You blind men, which is more important, the offering or the altar that sanctifies the offering?” Paul taught about the unbeliever’s blackout of the soul in **2Co 4:3-4**, “*In whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving.*” In **Rom 11:7-8**, “*God has given them a spirit of stupor, ‘Eyes to see not, ears to hear not,’ down to this very day.*”

Scar tissue of the soul was manifested in the Pharaoh of the Exodus generation, Pharaoh Thutmose III, **Rom 9:17**, “*For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, ‘For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth.’*” Pharaoh represented all the power of human rulership, but God demonstrated that this did not even compare to His own power, and, in so doing, He evangelized the entire world. Pharaoh had unprecedented and unequalled scar tissue of the soul. He revealed his hardness and scar tissue during the plagues of Egypt. In the first five plagues, he continually hardened his own heart. God still permitted him to live for the next five plagues, and Pharaoh had many opportunities to change his mind, **Exo 7:22, 8:15,32, 9:34-35**. Therefore, when the scripture says that “God hardened

his heart,” it simply means that God allowed him live to express his scar tissue of the soul, far beyond what anyone else had ever done in the past.

An individual can hear and see the truth through miracles, but because of scar tissue of the soul, it makes no impression. The believer in the cosmic system is not impressed with miracles; he is only impressed with the lie. God did not coerce Pharaoh’s volition, Pharaoh was a free agent with a free will; in fact, his life was extended by divine decree. God uses even the wrath of man to praise Him, **Psa 76:10**. Pharaoh even acknowledged that he had sinned; he faced the reality because of the pressure, but this did not save him. God did not create evil in Pharaoh; Pharaoh produced his own evil through his volition. However, God used Pharaoh’s evil to evangelize the world. The divine plan in hardening Pharaoh’s heart was threefold:

1. Liberation of the Jews from slavery, to form a client nation to God.
2. Evangelization of Egypt, **Exo 7:3-5**, “*But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart that I may multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. When Pharaoh will not listen to you, then I will lay My hand on Egypt, and bring out My hosts, My people the sons of Israel, from the land of Egypt by great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the sons of Israel from their midst.*”
3. Evangelization of the world, **Exo 9:16**, “*But, indeed, for this cause I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power, and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth.*”

Paul compares the Jews of the First Advent and Church-age with Pharaoh, to demonstrate that their negative volition and hardness of heart exceeded even Pharaoh’s, **Rom 9-11**.

The results and affects of scar tissue of the soul are as follows:

1. Stubbornness, **Exo 4:21**, “*And the Lord said to Moses, ‘When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go.’*”
2. Selfishness, **Deu 15:7**, “*If there is a poor man with you, one of your brothers, in any of your towns in your land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother.*”
3. No respect for the Lord, **Isa 63:17**, “*Why, O Lord, dost Thou cause us to stray from Thy ways, and harden our heart from fearing Thee? Return for the sake of Thy servants, the tribes of Thy heritage.*”
4. Self-destruction, **Exo 14:8**, “*And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he chased after the sons of Israel as the sons of Israel were going out boldly.*”
5. Rebellion, **2Ch 36:13**, “*And he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar who had made him swear allegiance by God. But he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the Lord God of Israel.*”
6. Slander and speaking evil, **Act 19:9**, “*But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.*”
7. Lack of perceptive ability, **2Co 3:14**, “*But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ.*”

8. Arrogance, **Neh 9:29**, *“And admonished them in order to turn them back to Thy law. Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to Thy commandments but sinned against Thine ordinances, by which if a man observes them he shall live. And they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen.”*
9. Refusal to receive correction, **Jer 17:23**, *“Yet they did not listen or incline their ears, but stiffened their necks in order not to listen or take correction.”*

For a more detailed study, order tapes IA11-360 to IA11-363.