

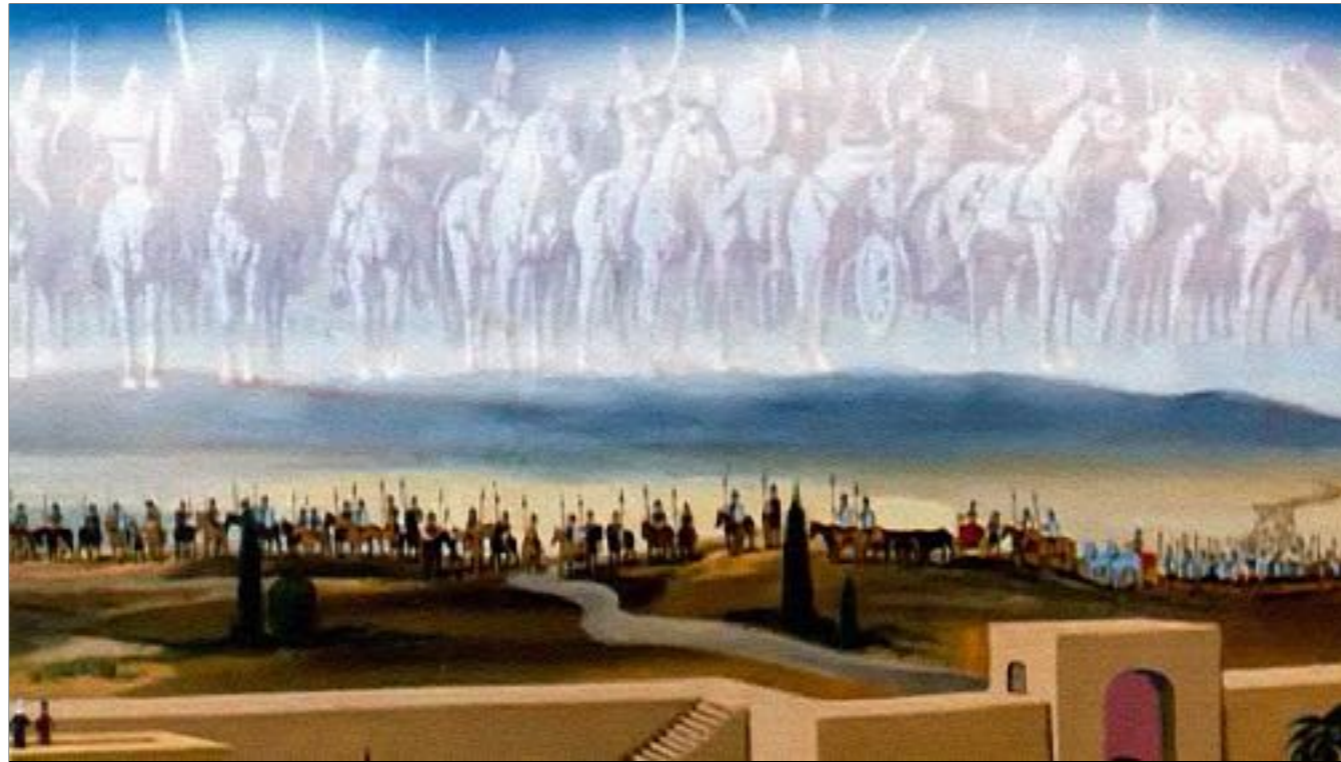


Be A.
Blessing

Romans 12:14, 17-21



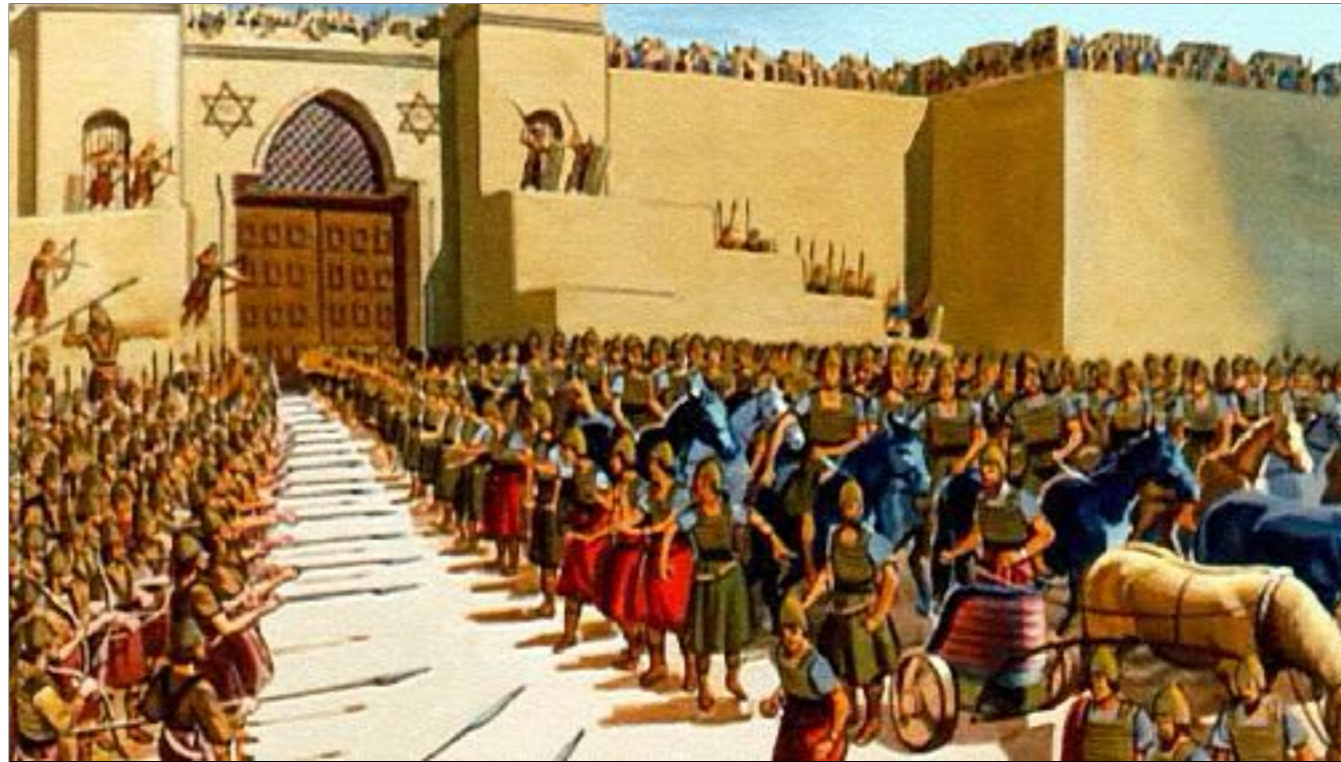
- The Syrian Army was out to get Elisha (2 Kings 6), surrounded the town he was in.
- Elisha's servant was fearful (of course)



- Elisha prays for his eyes to be opened, and he sees the armies of the Jehovah protecting them.



- When the Syrians attack, Elisha prays that they be blinded



- , and so he leads the the Army to Samaria (capital of Israel), to King Ahab, and prays that their eyes be opened.



- Ahab asks Elisha
 - 21 As soon as the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, “My father, shall I strike them down? Shall I strike them down?”
- Ahab’s question is a very normal response to having one’s enemies in one’s power.
 - These are our enemies: hurting us, trying to take things from us, trying to rule over us.
 - Must repay them for the wickedness they’ve done to us.
 - Best way to stop them is to show we are stronger, defeat them, kill them.



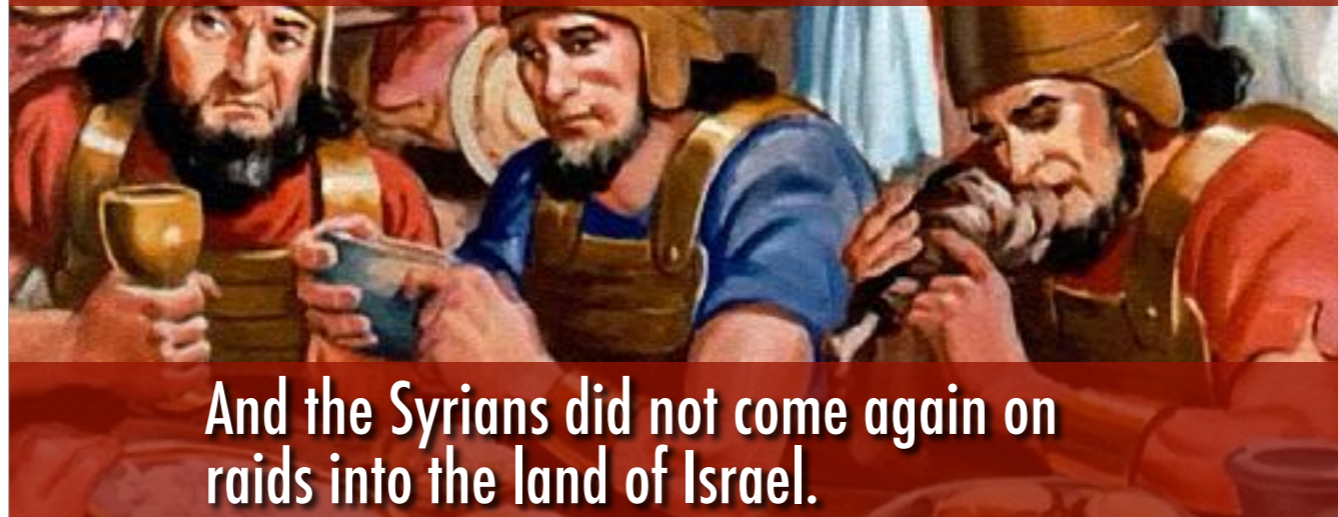
- We not only hear this all around us still, both nationally and personally,
 - But we often have these very same attitudes and rationalize them
 - When we were attacked, what was the common response? Bomb them back to the stone age.

You shall not strike them down ... Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.



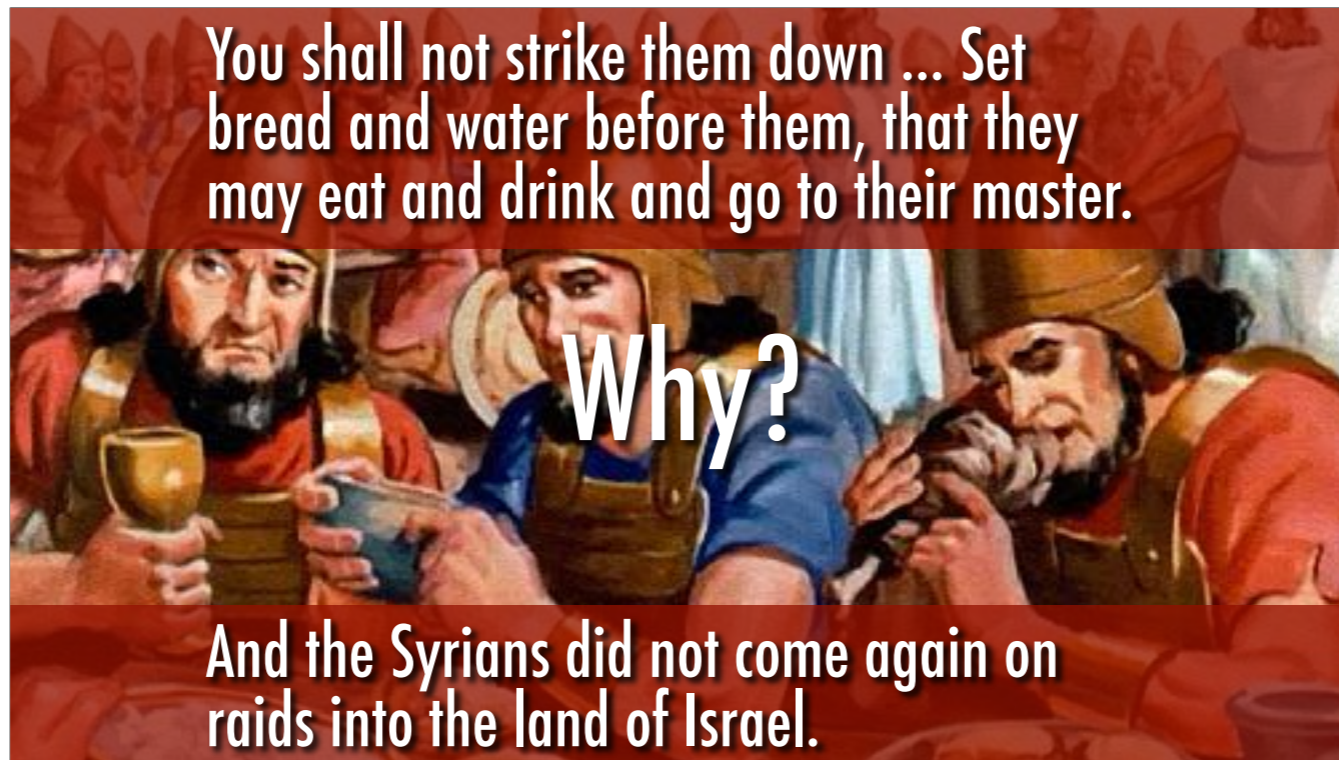
- 22 He answered, “You shall not strike them down. Would you strike down those whom you have taken captive with your sword and with your bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.”
- What did this sound like to Ahab? to the People?
- It’s backward. Why reward our enemies? Why let them go and free to fight us again?

You shall not strike them down ... Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.

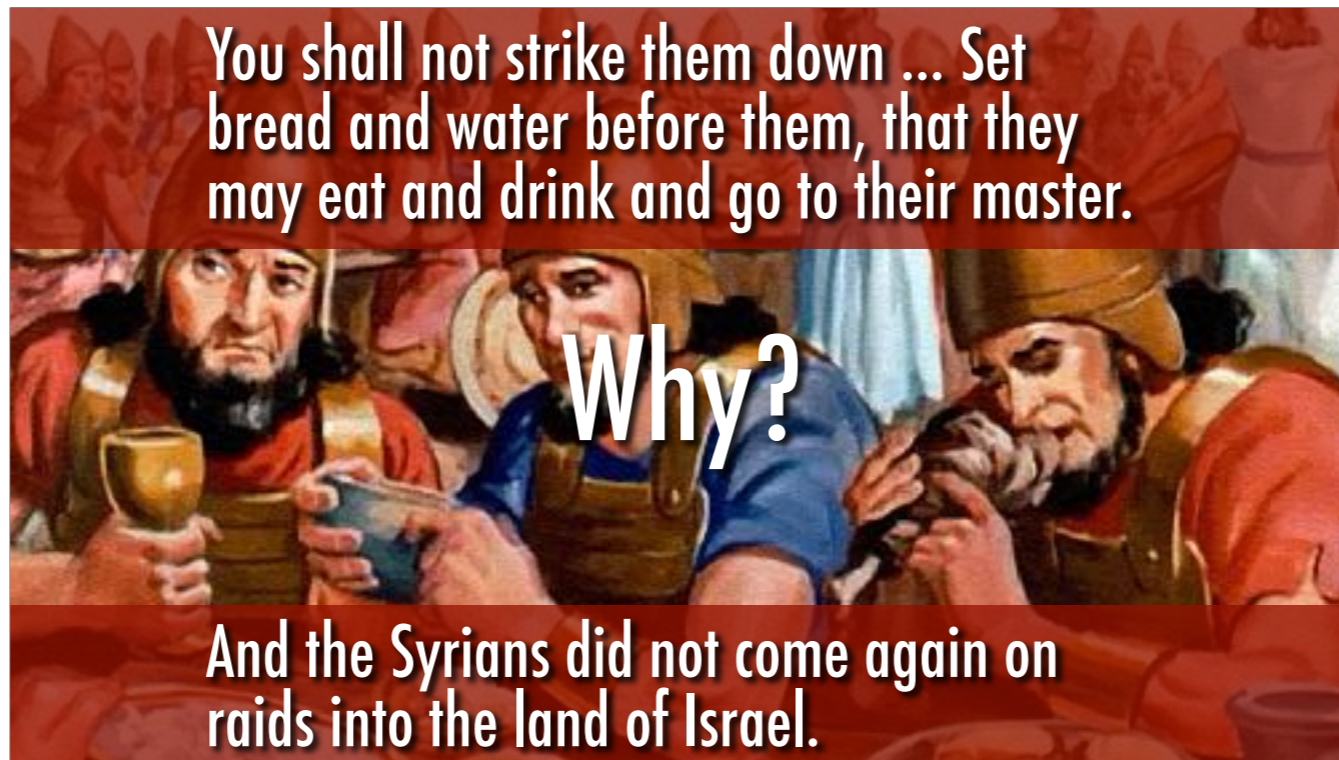


And the Syrians did not come again on raids into the land of Israel.

- 23 So he prepared for them a great feast, and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the Syrians did not come again on raids into the land of Israel.



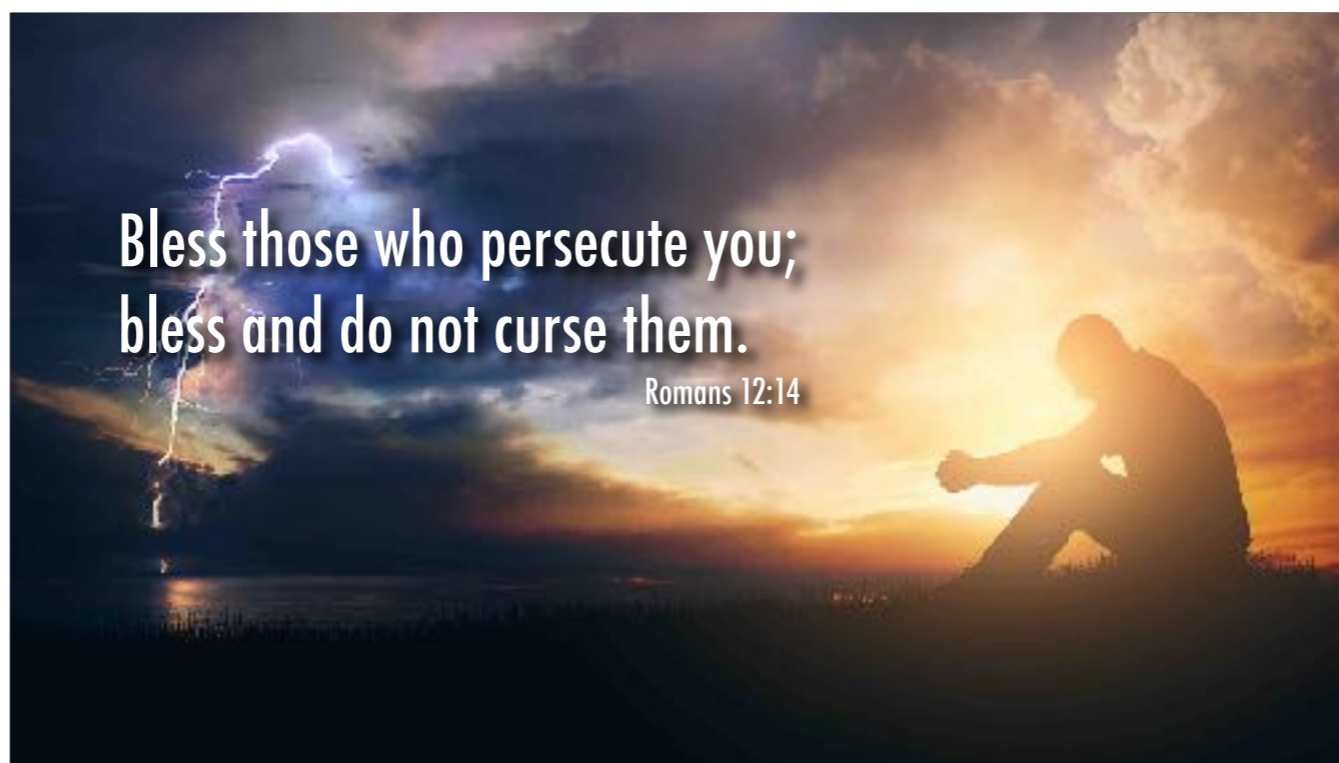
- Why?
 - Something changed... drastically.
 - Coincidence?
- The kindness shown to these men resulted in a complete change of behavior (for a time).



- An inspiring story... but not how real life works.
 - What happens when I get punched in the nose?
 - What happens when it's my child that gets hurt?
 - What happens when my country is unjustly attacked?
- Am I really just supposed to let it go? Let my child be tormented? Let attackers take over my homeland?



- Romans 12:2 (ESV) Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.



- Romans 12:14 (ESV) 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.
- Romans 12:17-21 (ESV) 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.



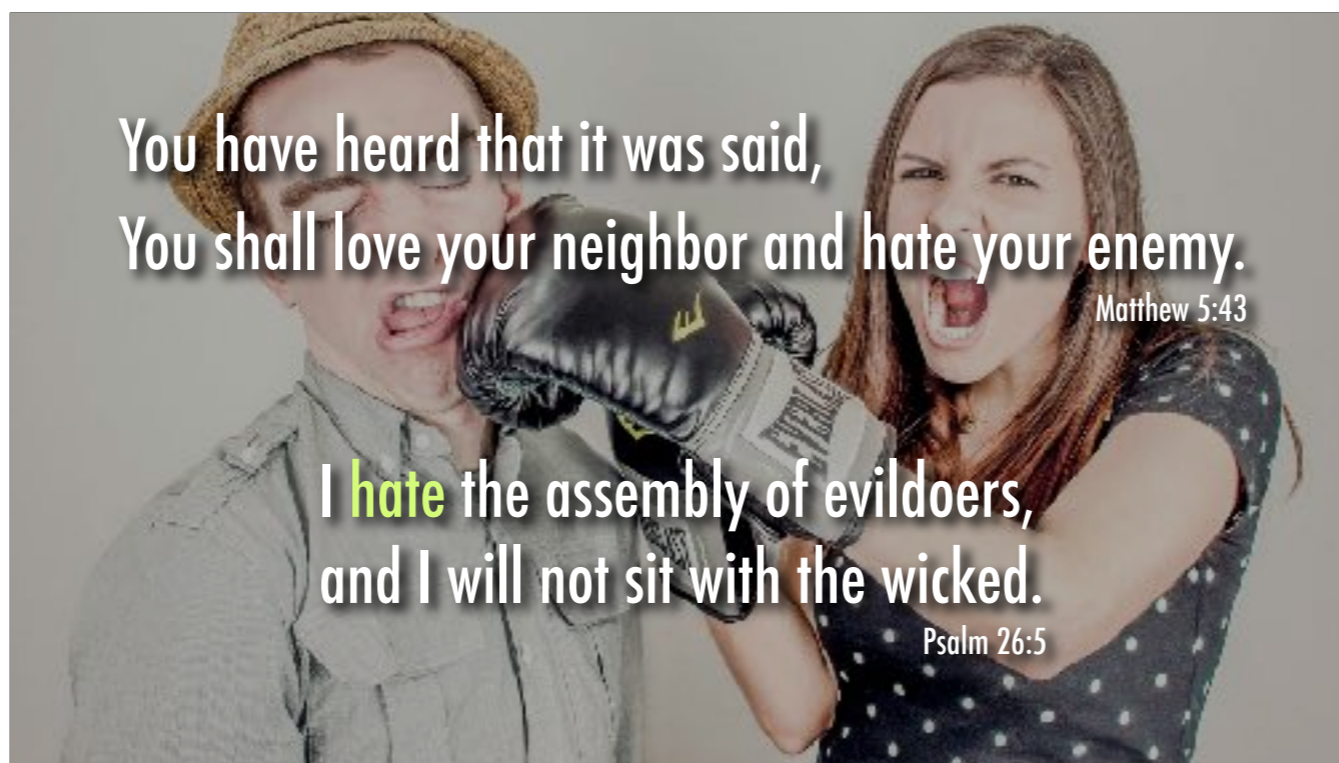
- How does the world react to persecution, and evil?
 - Curse (14)
 - Repay (17)
 - Avenge (19)
- How has this worked out for the world?



You have heard that it was said,
You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

Matthew 5:43

- Hate Your Enemies
- Matthew 5:43-48 (ESV) 43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ Who said this? and Why?”
- Psalms 26:5 (ESV) 5 I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked.
- Psalms 139:21-22 (ESV) 21 Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you? 22 I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies.



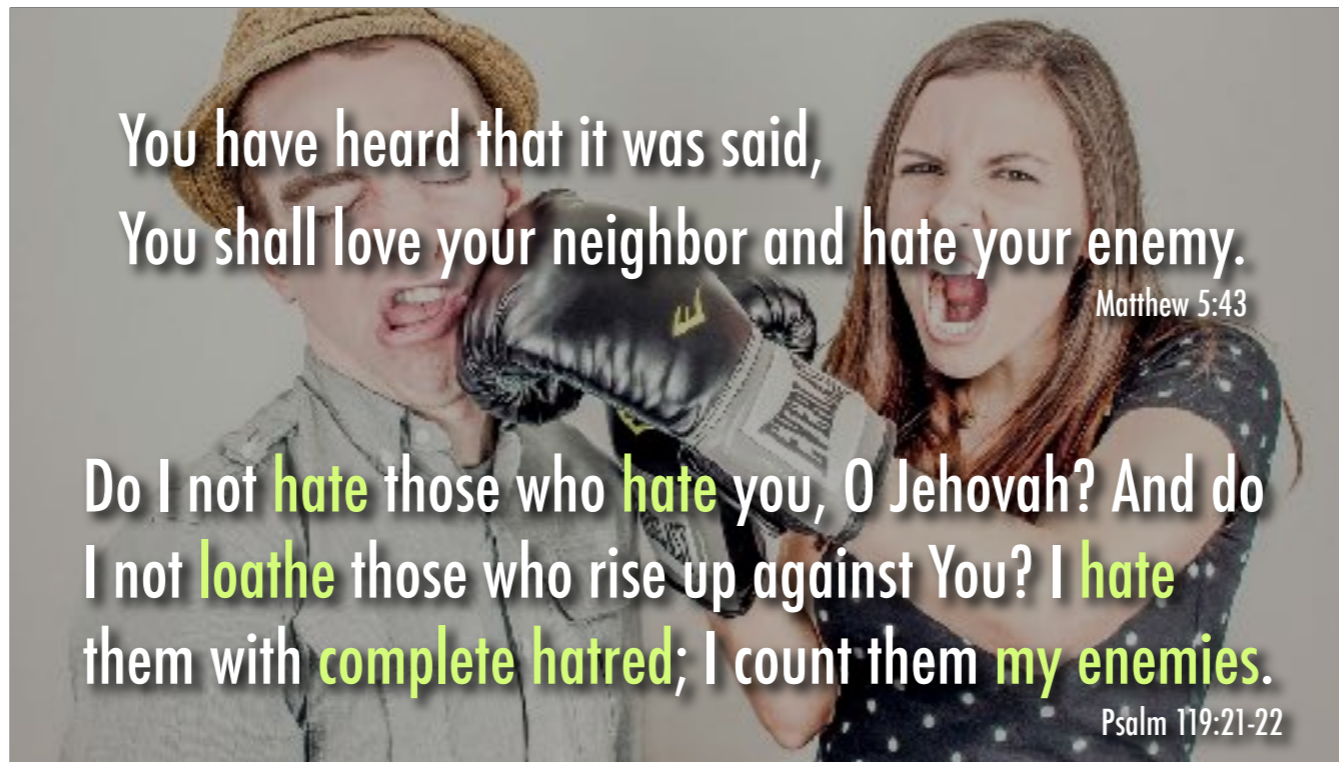
You have heard that it was said,
You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

Matthew 5:43

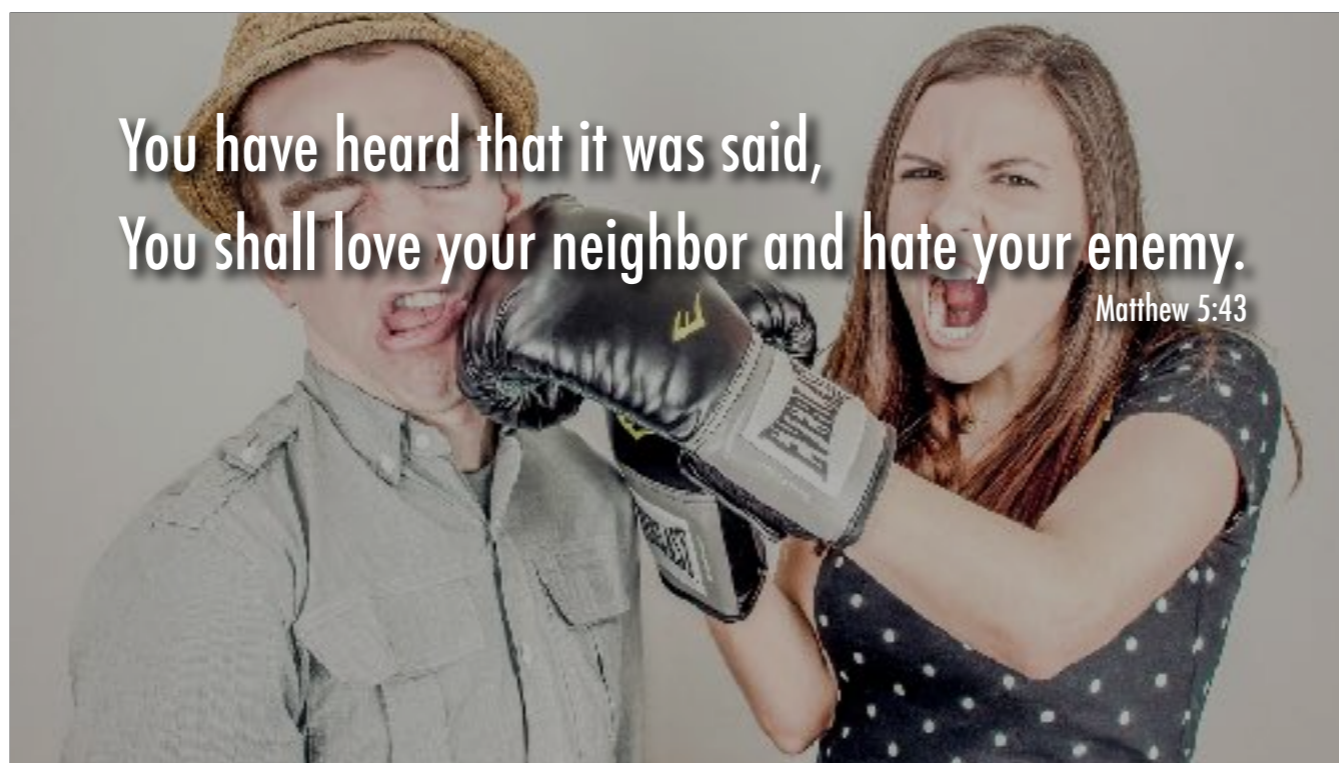
I **hate** the assembly of evildoers,
and I will not sit with the wicked.

Psalms 26:5

- Hate Your Enemies
- Matthew 5:43-48 (ESV) 43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ Who said this? and Why?”
- Psalms 26:5 (ESV) 5 I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked.
-



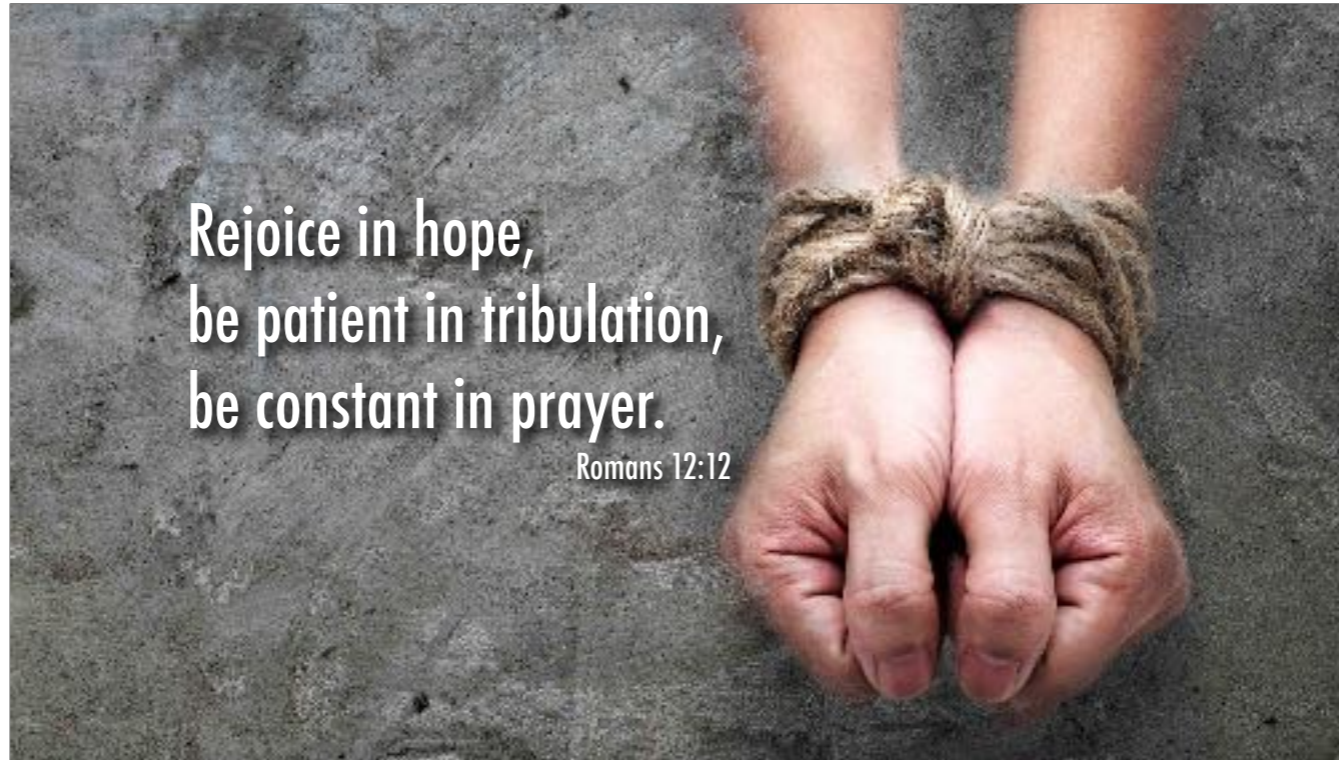
- Psalms 139:21-22 (ESV) 21 Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you? 22 I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies.
- Reading these verses is unsettling, very unsettling.
- There's more to these words, and it's meaning than just a moments reading... but it's easy to see how this could be misunderstood.
- Remember, though, at the very least, that these are the words of a man, not a command from God.
- Pharisees had turned hatred into a command of God.



You have heard that it was said,
You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

Matthew 5:43

- Truth is, this is very much how the world works still.
- It's how many of us still think, even if we don't act on it.
- Easily separated based on both big harms and little slights.
- We are all too comfortable with this in our lives and hearts.



- Paul had previously given instruction about how to deal with tribulation (Romans 12:12)
- Romans 12:12 (ESV) Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.



- Now he addresses the next step... not just how I am to endure, but how I am to be a blessing to those who persecute me.
- This is a great change:
- Not just personal: how I endure
- Now to be a positive influence on those who oppose me, and God.
- Tendency to think that walking away would be sufficient. Just let it go, go on with my life.
- More...
- This is how my Father has treated me.... he doesn't walk away, he doesn't just let me walk away.



- What is God telling me to do?
- Be a blessing.



- How must I treat those who persecute and do evil to me?



- Romans 12:14: Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.
- Bless (14), twice!
- Do not curse (wish evil on)
- We must speak good things to, and about, those who persecute us.
- Matthew 5:44: pray for those who persecute you
- This is not saying that we portray them as good.



- Rather, we wish good for them.
 - Jesus on the cross
 - Luke 23:34 And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”
 - Paul for Israelites
 - Romans 9:1-5 (ESV) 1 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. 4 They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. 5 To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.



- Do what is Honorable (17)
 - give thought
 - in the sight of all
- Matthew 5:44: Love your enemies
 - Jesus doesn't expect us to like, be friends with those who are persecuting and doing evil; or approve of them
 - He does expect us to do good.
- Father:
 - 45: (ESV) For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.



- Paul and Silas in Prison: Saved his life, and his spirit
 - Acts 16:27-28 (ESV) 27 When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here."
 - Acts 16:31-32 (ESV) 31 And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.



- Live Peaceably (18)
 - Romans 12:18 (ESV) 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.
- Paul recognizes that peace requires both sides
- My job is to do my part to live peaceably.
 - more than just don't provoke, or irritate
 - positive: find ways to influence and bring peace



- Mark 9:50 (ESV) 50 Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”
- Exodus 23:4-5 (ESV) 4 “If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him. 5 If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall rescue it with him.



- Never Avenge (19)
 - Romans 12:19 (ESV) 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”
 - Romans 12:17 (ESV) Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.
 - Romans 12:21 (ESV) Do not be overcome by evil
- King Ahab: “Shall we strike them down?”
- Nothing good ever comes from doing evil



- Feed, drink (20)
 - Romans 12:20 (ESV) 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”
- Elisha!
- Proverbs 25:21-22 (ESV) 21 If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink, 22 for you will heap burning coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you.
- This is love.
 - Enemies are to be treated with kindness.
 - Give to them what they need.
- Be careful about a grudging attitude.

Being a blessing means that I

Overcome evil with good



- Overcome Evil with Good (21)
 - Victorious
 - Excellent
- This is a battle, but we must not stoop to the ways of the enemy or of the world.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 (ESV) 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, 6 being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.
- Doing good needs to become our most powerful weapon in victory over evil.
- This is our opportunity to save a soul!

So then let us pursue what makes
for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

Romans 14:19



- How do we treat one another?
- When we find ourselves at odds over something personal, or biblical?
- If we are to treat our enemies with love, how much more one another, brothers in Christ?
- Romans 14:19 (ESV) So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.



- What is God telling me to do?
- Be a blessing.
 - Correct the way we think about our adversaries.
 - Correct the way we talk about our adversaries.
 - Correct the way we treat our adversaries.

**We implore you on
behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.**

2 Corinthians 5:20

Photo Credits:

All photos from istockphoto.com, crestock.com, bigstock.com, dreamtime.com, thinkstock.com, and shutterstock.com are copyright protected. They are used by permission. Please do not reuse without permission.)

123rf.com: 57203770_xl; 80864061_xl; 396160_xl; 388707_xl; 5780622_xxl
<https://pixabay.com/photos/bex-male-horned-mammal-nature-2462568/>
<https://pixabay.com/photos/argument-conflict-controversy-238529/>
<https://www.boredpanda.com/unusual-animal-friendships/>
Pixabay: wolf-383928_1920
lightstock_114252_medium_user_2379957
iStock_0000126298505small



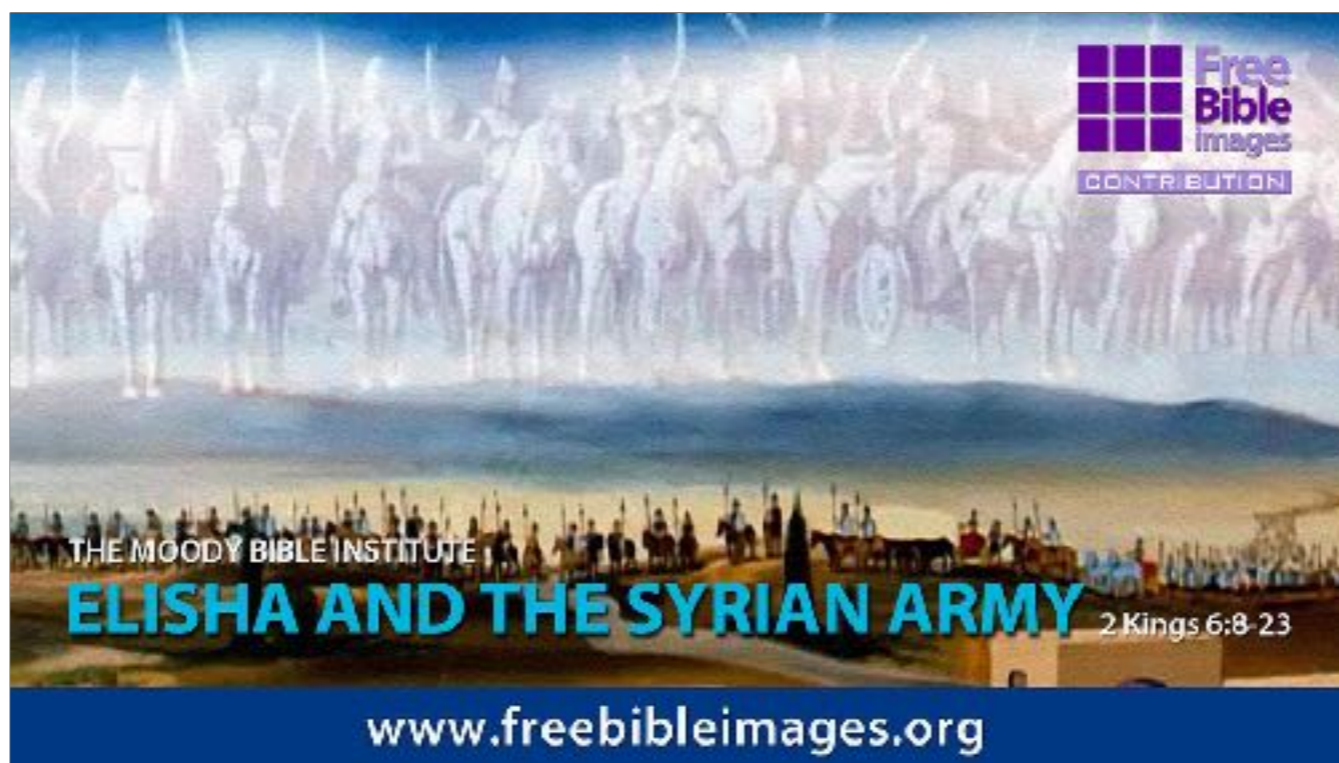
CONTRIBUTED BY



These images are the copyright of Moody Publishers and made freely available for teaching purposes only.
All other rights reserved.

Free Bible Images would like to thank Huw Rees for his work on this contribution.

www.freebibleimages.org



Free
Bible
images
CONTRIBUTION

THE MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE

ELISHA AND THE SYRIAN ARMY

2 Kings 6:8-23

www.freebibleimages.org

Be Transformed

#17

Compiled and Presented by:
Dave Stewart
2020 September 6
www.1corinthians1614.com

Be A Blessing

Romans 12:14, 17-21

Synopsis: Elisha tells King Ahab to not strike down their enemies, but to feed them and give them drink. To often we are like the world in the way that we treat our enemies, instead of being like our Father. In this lesson, Paul reminds us that our transformed mind would choose to be a blessing to our enemies: changing how we think, talk, and treat them.

*Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

“Let all that you do be done with love.”