

DIVE DEEPER

- ◇ How have you experienced God blessing you?
 √ Does He remove His blessings when we become His enemy?

READ Romans 12:14, 17-21 (NIV)

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.... 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. 20 On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

- ◇ What does it mean to "bless those who persecute you"?

≈ What are the challenges on both sides of this very personal issue?

§ **εὐλογεῖτε** [eulogeite] - Bless. To ask God to bestow divine favor on, with the implication that the verbal act itself constitutes a significant benefit—"to bless, blessing."

- ◇ What do you think it means to "leave room for God's wrath"?

§ **δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ** [dóte tópon tê órge] - Give a place to the wrath. God's name is not included. Make way for Divine wrath; do not anticipate it; do not get in its way; let it rule. This is the explanation of most commentators.

- ◇ In Romans 12:20, Paul quotes Proverbs 25:21-22:

If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
 if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.
 In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

≈ What have you heard that it means to "heap burning coals" on your enemy's head?

FORGIVENESS

YES • NO • MAYBE

1. I'm a forgiving person.
2. To forgive, you must first understand that the other person is a complete idiot.
3. True forgiveness can only come when the guilty has asked for forgiveness.
4. God provides opportunities for us to enact justice.
5. I go out of my way to shower my "enemies" with gifts & favors.



THE BIBLE LAB

DIVE DEEPER (CONTINUED...)

√ Does this fit with the character of God, and all of the things that have been said around this phrase?

◇ The ancient oriental custom of “heaping burning coals” on someone’s head:

√ What ultimate challenge does it create to develop this element of God’s character in our personal lives?

NOTES

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MY PRAYER

1. What “enemies” can I bless, and how can I do it authentically?
2. How much am I “leaving room for God’s wrath,” instead of trying to insure justice?
3. How does this enhance my perspective of God’s character even more?