



The Book of Luke 2Q 2015 Lesson 1 The Coming of Jesus

SABBATH

When you hear the title what do you think? I think the second coming, but the title is actually referring to His incarnation, His first coming.

Read memory text, “For with God nothing will be impossible.” Luke 1:37

This text serves as a good example of verses that can be misused, misunderstood, misapplied, i.e. the dangers of taking a Bible text by itself and believing it without thinking through what it actually means.

Is this statement true, as it reads?

- “For God cannot be tempted by evil” James 1:13
 - Can we say it is impossible for God to be tempted by evil?
- “The hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago: Titus 1:2
 - Can we say it is impossible for God to lie?

So are there some things impossible for God? Any others?

- Can God sin?
- Can God save a person against that person’s will? Why or why not?
- What does salvation actually mean? It means reconciliation to God in a trust relationship of love. Can trust and love be forced? So, can God save someone who refuses?

So, are there some things impossible for God? Why?

Because of His character and nature of love, which is the template and design parameters upon which reality exists. He cannot create a reality deviant from Himself, from love, because He is the source of life and only in Him does the universe hold together. Disintegration occurs without Him. This is reality.

So, when the text says “For with God nothing will be impossible” it is true in its context, which is in the context of telling a virgin she will get pregnant and conceive.

But taking this text blindly, simply believing it without thought, without understanding reality, is one way many distortions get taught about God. Thinking God can do anything, people then blame God when life doesn’t go the way they want it to.



Some, teaching the idea that all things are possible for God, that He therefore wanted Adam and Eve to sin, or that God causes evil, or that God makes all our choices for us, or that God chooses who will be saved and lost etc.

This leads to magical thinking, people do rituals to get God to give them what they want, people pray for things impossible for God to do such as heal a marriage in which the partners cheat on each other, lie to each other, abuse each other etc. Or, universalism, which teaches God saves everyone, but He cannot save those who won't allow Him.

Are there other passages of Scripture that pop into your mind that are taken as a proof text and applied where they don't belong?

Read first paragraph, "The Gospel of Luke..." Did you notice Luke was a physician? And what did the Study Guide note the doctor did? He presented facts, evidence, reliable testable data!

Doctors think through the lens of evidence and want people to be persuaded to understand and see reality as it actually is, just as the Study Guide says in the second paragraph, to believe reality not myth.

Are there myths taught in Christianity today?

- The *Universe* was created 6000 years ago (Job 38:6.7); The Bible doesn't teach this, the earth was terraformed sometime in the last 10,000 years, but the universe is billions of years old.
- Leadership in the church is for men only
- Leadership in the church is for those with theology degrees only
- God is the source of death which He inflicts as punishment for disobedience
- God requires some payment in order to assuage His wrath
- Sin is a legal problem
- Others?

SUNDAY

Read bottom pink section – "Luke, an inspired author..." What is the issue? Why is this being pointed out?

What is the concern for those who have lost confidence in certain sources because of allegations of plagiarism? They fear the information is not reliable – why do they fear this?

This question helps us consider the thinking of the immature versus the mature.

Children, the immature, don't know how to think things through for themselves. They don't know how to evaluate evidence, integrate diverse threads of evidence, weigh various points of



view, test against reliable standards, and come to healthy conclusions.

So, children want, seek, demand, an authority figure to tell them the answer, to make a ruling, they turn to mommy or daddy, whose right, or the teacher, or the umpire, referee, or judge, or the pastor, pope, Bible.

Many Christians operate at this level, not wanting to think through issues, not wanting to research, weigh evidences, integrate divergent sources of information, but instead simply want to be told the answer. They want a concise list of rules, dos and don'ts they can feel safe observing. They rest secure in someone else's conclusions. "My mommy said..." "My Pastor said..." "My Bible says..."

Those who want a rulebook get very concerned about who has been writing the rules. They have magical thinking about the Bible, and if something undermines their confidence in the source, not having the ability to assess the source material for themselves, they throw it out.

This is how many use the Bible and other Christian writings, as a rule book, a code, an external authority to make judicial rulings on thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors. We don't need to think, to weigh evidences, to understand God, His design, His principles, comprehending our duty in God's purposes, no, we need to find the right rule and apply it.... We are so concerned about being right, we want a ruling so we can feel good about ourselves and feel safe in what we are doing.

I get this frequently, people come up to me or email me and ask: "Is it right to work on Sabbath as a nurse and keep the pay? Is it right to eat this, or drink that? Is it right to divorce a spouse who ... fill in the blank?" etc.

But this approach is distinctly non-Biblical – Paul, in Romans 14 – addressed issues of worship, including Sabbath, and said every person must be fully persuaded in their own mind. Not, every person must submit their mind to the proper ruling authority.

Sadly, many times in church history, the institutional church has come down with rulings and mandated membership conform their beliefs to the ruling of the church. Again, this is not Biblical.

Presenting truth, in love and leaving people free is Biblical. Why? Because what God wants is love and trust, and love and trust can only occur when individuals come to understand reality for themselves. A person cannot love another because someone said, "It is the rule you must love him, and if you don't, well that is treason, law breaking, and God will kill you. So obey and love him."

Submission by rule leads to rebellion – it is only in an atmosphere of freedom that love grows.



And this comes back to which type of law one is operating upon. **Imposed law requires a ruling authority to rule – natural law requires educators to educate**, but deviants are left free to reap what they sew. We educate upon the dangers of smoking, drinking, drugs, unhealthy diet, premarital sex, pornography, rejecting the truth about God, etc. etc. but leave people free, and if they choose to do these things they reap the consequences and the consequences are ALWAYS damaging and eventually bring its harvest.

MONDAY

Read second paragraph, “The birth stories...” The lesson points out that the births of John the Baptist and Jesus were both miraculous – but it is important to note, the miracle performed in each case was quite different, and I want to note this because when it comes to pregnancy many people get confused by this.

What was the miracle performed in Elizabeth’s case, which is also the same miracle performed in all the cases in the Bible of women who were barren getting pregnant?

Did God perform a miracle to get them pregnant? No, the miracle performed was one of physical healing, like healing blindness, or deafness, but in these cases God healed or restored their ability to reproduce. The women still had natural relations with their husbands that got them pregnant. God did not get them pregnant.

Mary was different. In her case no miracle was performed to heal a physical defect or malady that prevented her from conceiving. In her case, God did instill a pregnancy in her, a true miracle birth.

When we speak of miracle births it also gives opportunity to demonstrate how Bible history also serves the purpose of revealing a larger reality. There are many examples of this: The family of Jacob:

- Brothers betray brother – symbolic of Lucifer’s betrayal of Christ
- The children of Israel as slaves in Egypt, symbolic humanity slaves in sin
- Pharaoh symbolic of Satan enslaving and abusing
- Moses a deliverer – symbolic of Christ our deliverer
- Attacks against the gods of Egypt – symbolic of Christ’s attacks against the lies of Satan
- Walking through red sea – symbolic of baptism
- Manna from heaven – symbolic of Jesus the bread of heaven

There are 7 examples of barren women who were healed and gave birth and they are all types of Christ. Real people, real history, but also serve as object lesson of Christ:

1. Sarah – Isaac – Mount Moriah symbolic of Jesus to be sacrificed
2. Rebekah – Jacob – who became Israel, twelve sons, Jesus twelve apostles to foundation



- of the church
3. Rachel – Joseph – who sold into slavery, became ruler to free the people; Jesus went into the slavery of sin in order to free us from it
 4. Monoah's wife – Samson – blessed with strength to deliver Israel from bondage and rule over them; Jesus our shield and strength and to rule the universe
 5. Hannah – Samuel – who became High Priest
 6. Shunammite woman – child died and resurrected
 7. Elizabeth – John the Baptist – who greatest of prophets

Isn't it odd – that God chose Abraham to be the family through which the Messiah would come, and the first three generations – Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel are all barren, and all require a miracle healing to conceive? What are the chances? Random? Or is there a great controversy going on? Was Satan afoot trying to obstruct God's plan by causing health problems? We don't have any inspired word that this happened, but I wonder?

Third paragraph states, "John was to be a preparer of the way for Jesus." What does this mean? Prepare how? Prepare what?

John was to prepare the minds of people to be ready to receive Jesus as Messiah. How?

John was basically diagnosing people as terminal in sin, telling them if they didn't recognize they were terminal and turn back to God for healing they would die. He wanted to introduce uneasiness with their current system and way of thinking, to cause them to be dissatisfied with their rituals and routines which had no power to heal them of their fear and selfishness and instill a longer for something better.

This he did and then Jesus came as the better way, the true Way, Truth and Life! And the people responded.

John was called the second Elijah – to prepare for the first Advent.

Do we have a role today to present a message of truth, like John, which exposes the failing of much of religion in the world today and motivate people out of complacency and stir up a desire for something better?

There is a prophecy in Malachi about Elijah coming before the second coming – why? What is the purpose?

Has the church found itself in a similar place as Israel 2000 years ago, popular, but powerless, filled with routine, ritual, rote performance and people stuck in sin?

Is there to be a message which is to cause people to be dissatisfied with the status quo, realize we have a terminal condition, and point them to a real remedy that heals?



Come to our seminar this afternoon, the second talk, becoming a spokesperson for God is all about this very topic.

TUESDAY

Read third paragraph, “The virgin birth of Jesus...” Why is the virgin birth of Jesus important?

- Establishes Jesus as something other than a mere product of sinful beings
- Why is it important that He was born of a sinful woman, rather than just coming as a man to earth?
- What was His mission? To do what?
 - To reveal the truth about God in order to expose Satan, destroy Satan’s lies and win beings to trust – could He have done that by just appearing as a man? Yes. Was that His total mission? No!
 - What else? He had to destroy death (2Tim 1:10) and had to destroy the devil’s work (1John 3:8) – and cure the human condition (Heb 2:14). Could He have done this without being born of a sinful woman? No – why?
 - Because the only way to cure this creation was to become a partaker of it, to be an actual descendant of Adam, and with the abilities of a human being, exercising a human brain, restore God’s design, God’s law of love into the species created to be its repository. Jesus Christ, in His humanity, developed a perfect human character, restoring God’s image into the species human, and destroyed the infection of selfishness – this destroyed death, the devil’s work and cured the terminal condition.

What do you think of this: “Every human question, no matter how natural or logical, must give way to the divine answer. Be it Creation or the Cross, the Incarnation or the Resurrection, the downpour of manna or the outpouring at Pentecost—the divine initiative demands human surrender and acceptance.”

What is meant by divine initiative? If it means, the evidence is so clear, so self-evident, the weight of truth and evidence itself demands we recognize it by its overwhelming clarity and reality, then okay, well and good. But, what if it means, God, declares the truth and then He demands we surrender and accept, is that the same thing? What is the problem with such a position?

It doesn’t persuade, it doesn’t convince, it doesn’t transform, it doesn’t ennoble, develop, mature, solidify in righteousness. Such a position as God demands and we must believe, makes us into mindless robots and this is not what God wants. It is a false idea, based on a core truth but twisted subtly to destroy the image of God in man.

John 15:15 Jesus gives the ideal by telling His apostles He wants them to be His friends, not



mindless slaves, because friends understand. He wants our understanding, not mere agreement. Because understanding increases our admiration, appreciation, awe, love, affection, devotion, loyalty.

Read bottom pink section, “Some secular cultures...” Are they suggesting God does things that are not scientific? Are they suggesting God does things that don’t make sense, that are unreasonable, that defy reality, that goes against the laws of nature?

Or are they suggesting only, that our understanding of science is limited and it is grandiose to think our finite minds can conceive of infinity, and therefore to suggest God be restricted to our current understanding of science is foolish?

Which way do you think things will go in the future: as we grow in our understanding of God and His design, as we live through eternity future, will we find things become less and less understandable, more and more mysterious and unclear, or that God and His actions become ever more clear, with sound reasons, in harmony with His own nature and design, i.e. the laws of nature?

For instance, the virgin birth, do you think God did this without using DNA and RNA? If DNA and RNA were used then was science involved? Was nature and nature’s laws involved? But who is the author of nature and science? God is – to suggest God’s ways are somehow outside of nature and science is suggesting God violates His own design for reality.

The problem is only in our limited understanding, not in science and nature.

WEDNESDAY

When you consider Jesus in a manger in Bethlehem, what is significant to you in this story? Has it become told so often that it has become a story without meaning?

Have you ever sat for a moment and considered, what it would be like to go to a barn, find a 17 y/o girl with her husband and newborn baby, and be told that child is the Creator God from heaven.

First, would you have a hard time believing it?

Second, when you did believe it what happens in you?

Do you want to worship Him or try to take possession of Him? Do you think how can I humble myself before Him, or how can I use Him? Do you feel safe and secure with a God who has to have his diaper changed?



What law lens are you considering this through? If your view is through imposed law, and we need a powerful authoritative deity, then seeing Jesus as a babe might be scary.

But, if we see through design law, and realize our condition is terminal, and this baby is the cure, the remedy, then we are in awe, reverent and in great appreciation!

Read last paragraph, “Luke’s record...”

- What is the significance that Jesus is the Savior of all people?
- There is no Jew or Greek, male or female etc. why? Because the entire human race has the same terminal condition, and Jesus is the Remedy for all human beings who partake, regardless of ethnicity, religious affiliation, sex, nationality etc.
 - i.e. design law – laws of health make no distinction for nationality etc. likewise the Remedy for sinfulness makes no distinction based on race etc.
 - But arbitrary laws, imposed rules can and do make distinction. Diplomats get special privileges when it comes to the laws of the nation they are visiting, police and other government officials get special privilege in observing the imposed laws of the land. But laws of health, physics, and God’s laws of love, liberty, truth, worship etc. make no distinction between people.
- What is the significance that there is no other Savior than Jesus?
 - Simply that Jesus is the only cure – does that mean a person has to know about Jesus to partake of the Remedy He has procured? i.e. only those who are baptized into Christianity can be saved?
 - If Penicillin cures a particular infection – does someone have to know about Penicillin to benefit from taking it? Do they have to call it Penicillin to benefit from taking it? How about they take the Penicillin, but call it Shaman’s magic milk, will calling it Shaman’s magic milk make it less effective, turn it into something else?
 - If a person responds to the Holy Spirit and chooses love, truth, freedom, whose character are they choosing? If they live to love others more than self, whose character are they living by?
 - Romans 1:20 God’s divine nature is seen in what he has made so men are without excuse
 - For it is **not those who hear the law who are righteous in God’s sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.**¹⁴ (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, **do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves**, even though they do not have the law. ¹⁵They **show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts**, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.) Romans 2:13-15



- ¹³For it is not those who hear about love, truth and freedom who are healthy and right in God's sight, but it is those who internalize in their hearts and minds the principles of love, truth and freedom and have characters transformed to be like Jesus who are diagnosed as righteous.¹⁴(Indeed, when Gentiles, who have not heard the truth about God's character, methods and principles as revealed in Scripture, internalize in their characters God's methods of love, truth and freedom which they have understood from God's revelation in nature, they are in harmony with God and his great law of love, even though they have not had the benefit of Scripture,¹⁵ since they reveal that the infection of selfishness has been removed and love has been written in their hearts, their consciences are cleansed and are in harmony with God, and their thoughts are able to discern the right from the wrong - the healthy from the unhealthy.) *The Remedy* Rom 2:13-15
- Revelation 12:11 these are they who do not love their lives so much as to shrink from death
- Those whom Christ commends in the judgment may have known little of theology, but **they have cherished His principles**. Through the influence of the divine Spirit they have been a blessing to those about them. Even among **the heathen are those who have cherished the spirit of kindness**; before the words of life had fallen upon their ears, they have befriended the missionaries, even ministering to them at the peril of their own lives. **Among the heathen are those who worship God ignorantly**, those to whom the light is never brought by human instrumentality, yet they will not perish. **Though ignorant of the written law of God, they have heard His voice speaking to them in nature, and have done the things that the law required. Their works are evidence that the Holy Spirit has touched their hearts, and they are recognized as the children of God.** {DA 638.2}

So, no one can be healed to be like Christ without the victory that Christ procured at the Cross. But, that doesn't mean there is some mechanical, legalistic process a person must go through in some ritualistic way claiming the right words etc. No, it is about character, about being restored to Christlikeness in heart where we love others more than self and have fear and selfishness purged by love.

This is only possible because of the victory of Jesus and even those who haven't heard of Christ, but who are transformed to love are transformed only as they partake of Christ via the work of the Holy Spirit.



THURSDAY

The lesson points us to Simeon's prophecy in Luke 2:25-35, from *The Remedy*:

In Jerusalem was a faithful and pure-hearted man named Simeon. He was waiting to see the deliverer, promised to come through Israel, and his mind was enlightened by the Holy Spirit.²⁶The Holy Spirit had revealed to him that he would not die before he had seen God's Remedy.²⁷Impressed and directed by the Holy Spirit, he went to the temple courts. When Mary and Joseph brought baby Jesus to fulfill the rituals required by the script,²⁸Simeon held him in his arms and praised God. He said:

²⁹"Sovereign God, you have kept your promise to me and now I can retire in peace.³⁰For with my own eyes I have seen your Remedy,³¹whom you have sent for all the people to behold,³²a beacon of truth to enlighten the world and for the complete restoration and glorification of your triumphant people."

³³The boy's father and mother were deeply moved by what this man said about Jesus.³⁴Then Simeon gave them his blessing and said to Mary, the boy's mother: "This child's purpose and mission is to cause the downfall of selfishness and the rising up of love in those who overcome with God, and to be the supreme evidence of God's character of love, but many will oppose him.³⁵As a result the true thoughts and motives of many hearts will be revealed, and a sword will pierce your soul."

FRIDAY

Read question 3 – if you had the opportunity to interview Jesus what question would you like to ask Him?



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Remedy – Dr. Jennings’ New Testament Paraphrase is now available on our website, and the app for android devices is in the Google play store. The IOS version will be available shortly.

- This is a FREE app
- Please read the preface to understand the approach to this paraphrase
- We have cards available to share with others and will ship them at no cost
- Also, if you find typos please email those to us so we can fix any missed typos

CARDS – If you have any of our ministry business cards please check to see if they have our current address: PO Box 28266 Chattanooga, TN 37424. If they are the old ones please discard them. We will be happy to send new ones, just email us. Thanks!

Opportunity to Share:

The General Conference of SDA will have its meeting (which occurs every five years) in San Antonio Texas, July 1-12, 2015. 50,000-70,000 Adventist from all over the world are expected to attend. This presents an opportunity to share this healing message about God in a most impactful way.

We plan on giving away our DVDs, Dr. Jennings’ Book *Could It Be This Simple?* and other materials. This will be an enormous project. If you would like to share in this opportunity, you can do so by making donations to *Come and Reason Ministries* either via Paypal, or check mailed to our address below.

New Mailing Address: PLEASE UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS BOOK:

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Distribution: Our materials now are available in South Africa. To request materials in South Africa email comeandreason.sa@gmail.com Thanks to Samuel Jacobs who manages distribution for us.

And in Australia or New Zealand email australia@comeandreason.com and Thanks to Simon Harrison who manages our ministry down under. Dr. Jennings will be going back to Australia/New Zealand spring 2015. If you are interested in Dr. Jennings speaking at your group please contact Simon at this email address.

April 10-11, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Yuba City, SDA Church, Yuba City, CA.

April 13, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the meeting of Adventist Health Systems West, Sacramento, CA.

April 13, 2015 (7 p.m.): Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Carmichael SDA church in Sacramento, CA.

April 23, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Faith and Mental Health Board in Goshen Indiana.

May 1-2 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Springwood SDA Church Brisbane, Australia.

May 3, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at St Andrews Anglican Church Lutwyche, Australia.

May 5-9, 2015: Dr. Jennings will speak in Australia specific venues pending for these dates

May 11-12, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Peer Psychology Group Seminar, Melbourne, Australia, For info contact Tamara Auora-McCulloch at ladytamara.amcc@gmail.com

May 15, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Avondale College, Cooranbong, NSW, Australia.

May 16, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be doing an all day seminar at Maitland SDA Church, Australia

May17-20, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking to the Adventist Education Department, Auckland, New Zealand.

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