

Jeremiah 4Q 2015 Lesson 4 Rebuke and Retribution

SABBATH

Read Memory Text: "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise." (Jer 17:14 NKJV)

What does this text tell us? Have you heard of something called parallelism? It is the method of writing where the same idea is repeated in different words. In this case the idea of healing and saving. The Scripture does this because these two ideas are synonyms, i.e. they mean the same thing.

When you consider healing—do you think this is metaphor or reality?

Why is it important to recognize salvation is healing and healing is not metaphorical?

- In the passage who does the healing?
- Who is in need of healing?
- Who gets the praise and credit for the healing?
- What role does the sin-sick person play?
- What law does healing operate upon?
- Where is the place for legal action?
- Do doctors ever give their patients rules to follow? Why?
- Did God give His patients rules to follow? Why?
- What if a patient refuses to follow the doctor's instructions, what does the doctor do? What happens to the patient?
- What does God do to those who refuse to follow His instructions? What happens to the sinner? Why?

Read first paragraph, "What has been..." What do you understand this to mean? Why does history repeat itself? Because all human history has been a battle between two opposing principles or methods, and these methods operate in constant predictable patterns.

- Satan's methods: Lies, selfishness, coercion, imposed law with imposed punishments
- God's methods: Truth, Love, Freedom, Design law with natural consequences

Notice this description of how things began in heaven, what the allegations were, what Christ accomplished to deal with the crisis, and how God's law is contrasted from Satan's representation of God's law. From the book The Desire of Ages:



In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan; and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice. [What kind of law is Satan describing? A law which created beings can make, a system of rules that require oversight and coercive enforcement. This is Satan's lie about God's law and as we look through history we see this repeats itself over and over again.] ...God could not be just, he urged, and yet show mercy to the sinner. [What is the basis of this allegation? What kind of justice is this? What level of thinking? What law is this based upon? Again this is imposed law, and thus the allegation to not impose punishment is to not uphold the law. However, when we understand Design law, we realize that justice is not about punishment, but restoring/healing back to harmony with the design.] {DA 761.4}

But even as a sinner, man was in a different position from that of Satan. [Different position how? Different legal position? Or different position in objective reality? Note how] Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God's love. Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him. [Why? Was Jesus unwilling to give His life for Lucifer? Was Jesus unwilling to pay a "legal penalty"? Did God love Lucifer less than humans? Was God playing favorites? No! No! It was because Lucifer had destroyed in himself the capacity to respond to truth and love. He had seen, understood, and participated in God's love and rejected it. This again, is design law. It would be like a person refusing the only antidote to poison.] But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by Satan's sophistry. The height and depth of the love of God he did not know. For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God. [What is it man needs? Is it a legal penalty? No, that is what is needed if one is operating under Satan's false view of God's law. But when we understand the truth we need to be set right in heart and mind with God, meaning we need the lies removed and truth and love restored within] {DA 761.5}

Through Jesus, God's mercy was manifested to men; but mercy does not set aside justice. [What does this mean? Do we view justice through imposed law or design law? What difference does it make?] The law reveals the attributes of God's character, [which is what?] and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. [Why? For the same reason the law of respiration cannot be changed to meet a person drowning. God's law is the protocol upon which life is actually constructed to operate.] God did not change His law, but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man's redemption. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. {DA 762.1} [Which means that Christ was carrying out God's purpose to fix what sin did to humanity, set humanity back into harmony with God's law—design! Notice the next description about justice.]



The law requires righteousness,--a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. [Notice this is Christ developing a perfect human character and then healing humans back to this perfect state. This is literal not metaphorical.] Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Romans 3:26. {DA 762.2} [If you see someone drowning, is it right or just to pull them from the water and administer CPR to revive them? What law are you operating under? Why, if you want them to live, must you do this? This is God's justice and what He accomplished for us through Christ.]

God's love has been expressed in His justice no less than in His mercy. Justice is the foundation of His throne, and the fruit of His love. It had been Satan's purpose to divorce mercy from truth and justice. He sought to prove that the righteousness of God's law is an enemy to peace. But Christ shows that in God's plan they are indissolubly joined together; the one cannot exist without the other. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Psalm 85:10. {DA 762.3} [How does Satan attempt to divorce mercy from justice? By an imposed law construct, which results in a split Godhead in which Christ in mercy dies to pay a legal penalty for our sins to a wrathful father who is the administrator of just punishments. Thus, justice is separated from mercy in the way we perceive and describe God—leading to theologies in which Jesus must protect us from the Father. 1. Jesus pleads His blood to the Father. 2. Jesus covers us with His blood so the Father can't see us. 3. Jesus applies His blood to our record books so the Father can't punish us for our bad deeds. 4. Jesus is our heavenly attorney to argue our case before the Father to protect us from His judgment and punishment. 5 Jesus took our place and was executed by His Father on the cross to pay for our sins. All of this is the divorcing of mercy from truth and justice by created a false caricature of the Godhead.]

By His life and His death, Christ proved that God's justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed. Satan's charges were refuted. [How?] God had given man unmistakable evidence of His love. {DA 762.4}

Another deception was now to be brought forward. [History now repeats itself] Satan declared that mercy destroyed justice, that the death of Christ abrogated the Father's law. [What kind of law can be rescinded, changed, or abrogated? Imposed law, the kind of laws created beings make. Design law cannot be changed or abrogated. Thus Satan's allegations that began in heaven that God's law requires punishment, i.e. imposed law, now repeats itself and is accepted by the vast majority of humans, including Christians.] Had it been possible for the



law to be changed or abrogated, then Christ need not have died... It was because the law was changeless, because man could be saved only through obedience to its precepts, that Jesus was lifted up on the cross. [Why? Because the law is the protocol of life, and only in harmony with it is there salvation, or healing!] Yet the very means by which Christ established the law Satan represented as destroying it.[How? Twofold, one by declaring the law is no longer binding, which is only possible if the law were imposed rules. But, also, amongst those who claim the law is still binding, by tricking them into accepting the imposed construct, thus they claim loyalty to God's law and all the commandments, while they present it as imposed rules requiring God to inflict punishment. They, thereby misrepresent God, the Cross and God's law and ultimately practice Satan's methods of coercion as they will one day force other to worship as they do.] Here will come the last conflict of the great controversy between Christ and Satan... [This is where we are today in Christianity, fighting a battle over God's law, not which day of worship, but which law—imposed or Design law. We are to call people back to worship Him who made the heavens... to Designer worship.] {DA 762.5}

By substituting human law for God's law, Satan will seek to control the world. [How? Not simply by a change in rules, but a change in the entire idea of law from the law the Creator builds life upon, to imposed rules.] This work is foretold in prophecy. Of the great apostate power which is the representative of Satan, it is declared, "He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand." Daniel 7:25. {DA 763.1}

Men will surely set up their laws to counterwork the laws of God. They will seek to compel the consciences of others, and in their zeal to enforce these laws they will oppress their fellow men. [Here we have it—the use of compelling power, which is always used in imposed law systems. This is how Christianity, including our church presents God today. That God, in order to be just, must punish sin, just as Satan declared in heaven, thus history repeats itself.] {DA 763.2}

The warfare against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time. Every man will be tested. Obedience or disobedience is the question to be decided by the whole world. All will be called to choose between the law of God and the laws of men. Here the dividing line will be drawn. There will be but two classes. Every character will be fully developed; and all will show whether they have chosen the side of loyalty or that of rebellion. {DA 763.3} [Notice the paragraph, it is about developing character, character of love like Jesus, in which we sacrifice ourselves for others, present truth in love and leave others free. Or, character like the beast, where we use compelling power to coerce conformity!]

Then the end will come. God will vindicate His law and deliver His people. Satan and all who have joined him in rebellion will be <u>cut off</u>. Sin and sinners will perish, root and branch... [Why?] {DA 763.4}



This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown. God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, he separates from God, and thus cuts himself off from life. [This is design law, not imposed penalties!] He is "alienated from the life of God." Christ says, "All they that hate Me love death." Ephesians 4:18; Proverbs 8:36. God gives them existence for a time that they may develop their character and reveal their principles. This accomplished, they receive the results of their own choice. By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them. {DA 764.1}

At the beginning of the great controversy, the angels did not understand this. [What did angels not understand? God's law as design law, as an outworking of His character of love. They were confused by Satan's lies that God's law functions like human law. Thus history repeats itself as humans suffer the same confusion.] Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished; but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable result of sin. A doubt of God's goodness would have remained in their minds as evil seed, to produce its deadly fruit of sin and woe. [How many Christians today, including in our own church, fail to understand this and instead teach the same distortion that God must kill the wicked, rather than the truth that sin itself, unremedied results in death!] {DA 764.2}

But not so when the great controversy shall be ended. Then, the plan of redemption having been completed, **the character of God is revealed to all created intelligences**. The precepts of His law are seen to be perfect and immutable. Then sin has made manifest its nature, Satan his character. Then the extermination of sin will vindicate God's love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. {DA 764.3}

Where do we find ourselves now? Do you see history repeating itself over and over again? And here at this time in history God is preparing people to come back to the truth about His character and law of love, and teach the truth about Him and His Design for life!

In the next paragraph it states, "prophets, who were often called to deliver words of warning and rebuke to those who should have known better." Do we have message of warning to give to the world, to our own church and leaders? What is that message?

It is the truth about God's law of love being design law, and the need to free our minds from the imposed law, penal substitution distortion that has infected the world! To worship Him who made...

The last sentence states, "Jeremiah, whose ministry seemed to consist of nothing but rebuke and retribution: he giving the rebuke, and the leaders giving him retribution."



Is this also history repeating itself—with those who call leaders to reject the penal legal views of God with the arbitrary rules and regulations experiencing retribution from those same leaders?

SUNDAY

First paragraph states: "From the earliest chapters of Genesis to the last chapters of Revelation, the Bible presents to us only two options on how to live: we either follow the Lord with all our heart and soul, or we don't." What happens if we don't?

How we answer this questions reveals much about the way we view God's law and God's character? Is it:

- 1. Like a patient who refuses to follow the treatment of the doctor and is given up to die as a result of their unhealed condition? OR
- 2. Like a criminal who refuses to accept the legal payment to the court and therefore the ruling authority uses its power to inflict punishment and death?

Read Jeremiah 17:5-10:

This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord. ⁶ He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. ⁷ "But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. ⁸ He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." ⁹ The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? ¹⁰ "I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve"

What do you hear being described? What does "cursed" mean? What is the curse of sin? Notice the description, of plants in wastelands...this is Design law, a plant cut off from its source of nurturance and it will wither and die!

This is what happens to people who reject God, they cut themselves off from the source of life, from the living water, and dying they die.



But those who trust God are like plants that are by water, they are connected to God, the source of life, and no difficulty can destroy them.

What do you understand regarding the condition of the human heart?

What does it mean that God searches the hearts? For what purpose? Like a judge looking for reasons to reward or punish, or like a doctor seeking to heal all defects in those who will permit Him to do so?

Why the language which looks on the heart to find out the deeds? Do we have to look at the heart to find the deeds or conduct? Why this language?

Because God is speaking to children, who focus on deeds, and He is trying to teach them what Christ taught in the Beatitudes that the deeds are the outgrowth of the condition of the heart, or make a tree good and its fruit will be good. Thus, the condition of the heart will ultimately determine the actions and deeds of the life. Further it isn't about the specific deeds but the motives for those deeds, thus God looks to the heart to remove selfishness and write His character/law of love there.

How does the human heart deceive? What causes such deception?

Is this talking about simple finiteness of ability and an inability to understand complex ideas or processes, or even believing things one was taught in childhood? For instance, believing that the earth was flat at some time in the past, or coming to the wrong answer on a calculus test or physics exam?

I don't think so, I believe this text is referring to how the human mind is capable of deceiving itself about the true condition and motives of one's actions.

- A person who beats his wife but says he does it only because he loves her.
- A person who buys gifts for their spouse—telling themselves it is because they love them, but in reality it is to offset guilt, or make themselves feel better.

MONDAY

Read Jeremiah 17:1-4:

"Judah's sin is engraved with an iron tool, inscribed with a flint point, on the tablets of their hearts and on the horns of their altars. ² Even their children remember their altars and Asherah poles beside the spreading trees and on the high hills. ³ My mountain in the land and your wealth and all your treasures I will give away as plunder, together with your high places, because of sin



throughout your country. ⁴ Through your own fault you will lose the inheritance I gave you. I will enslave you to your enemies in a land you do not know, for you have kindled my anger, and it will burn forever."

What does it mean that sin is engraved on their hearts and the horns of their altars?

The heart is symbolic of the mind/character of the person. The horns of the altar are symbolic of the character/motives of a person. Thus, a person's decisions determine the character they develop.

What does God do? He removes His protection and lets them reap what they have chosen, the care of their false gods, and what does sin always lead to? Pain, suffering, loss and slavery. How does sin lead to slavery today?

- Are people who indulge addictions free or slaves?
- Are people who abuse their bodies free or slaves?
- Are people who cheat, free or slaves?
- Are people who violate any aspect of God's law free or slaves?

Where is the highest freedom found? In harmony with God's design. Anything that deviates from God's design law results in loss of autonomy and freedom, i.e. enslaves us.

What of the idea of God's anger burning forever? How do we understand this?

What law lens do we look through? With what or whom is God angry?

God is angry at sin, like a doctor is angry at disease, thus His anger never ends. Good doctors always hate disease, but love their patients. God will always hate sin, which damages and destroys, but He loves sinners, even those who die in the end.

Thus Oswald Chambers wrote regarding God's wrath:

"When we speak of the wrath of God we must not picture Him as an angry sultan on the throne of heaven, bringing a lash about people when they do what He does not want. There is no element of personal vindictiveness in God. It is rather that God's constitution of things is such that when a man becomes severed from God his life tumbles into turmoil and confusion, into agony and distress; it is hell at once, and he will never get out of it unless he turns to God; immediately he turns, chaos is turned into cosmos, wrath into love, distress into peace.



"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord" we persuade men to keep in touch with Him." Conformed to His Image, pg 363

TUESDAY

Read John 3:19:

And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

What does this mean?

Again from Oswald Chambers:

The Bible does not say that God punished the human race for one man's sin, but that the nature of sin, namely, my claim to my right to myself, entered into the human race through one man. But it also says that another Man took upon Himself the sin of the human race and put it away — an infinitely more profound revelation...

Sin is something I am born with and cannot touch— only God touches sin through redemption. It is through the Cross of Christ that God redeemed the entire human race from the possibility of damnation through the heredity of sin. God nowhere holds a person responsible for having the heredity of sin, and does not condemn anyone because of it. Condemnation comes when I realize that Jesus Christ came to deliver me from this heredity of sin, and yet I refuse to let Him do so. From that moment I begin to get the seal of damnation. "This is the condemnation [and the critical moment], that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light . . . " (John 3:19) Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest, http://utmost.org

What does this mean? We are not condemned because we are born sinners, but because we refuse the only Remedy to this condition.

Read Jeremiah 11:18-23:

¹⁸ Because the Lord revealed their plot to me, I knew it, for at that time he showed me what they were doing. ¹⁹ I had been like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter; I did not realize that they had plotted against me, saying, "Let us destroy the tree and its fruit; let us cut him off from the

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land of the living, that his name be remembered no more." ²⁰ But, O Lord Almighty, you who judge righteously and test the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you I have committed my cause. ²¹ "Therefore this is what the Lord says about the men of Anathoth who are seeking your life and saying, 'Do not prophesy in the name of the Lord or you will die by our hands'— ²² therefore this is what the Lord Almighty says: 'I will punish them. Their young men will die by the sword, their sons and daughters by famine. ²³ Not even a remnant will be left to them, because I will bring disaster on the men of Anathoth in the year of their punishment.'"

What do you understand is happening here? What is God doing? What is their punishment? Why does it come? Who inflicts it? What kind of law is being described here?

WEDNESDAY

Read Jeremiah 12:1-4:

You are always righteous, O Lord, when I bring a case before you. Yet I would speak with you about your justice: Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all the faithless live at ease? ² You have planted them, and they have taken root; they grow and bear fruit. You are always on their lips but far from their hearts. ³ Yet you know me, O Lord; you see me and test my thoughts about you. Drag them off like sheep to be butchered! Set them apart for the day of slaughter! ⁴ How long will the land lie parched and the grass in every field be withered? Because those who live in it are wicked, the animals and birds have perished. Moreover, the people are saying, "He will not see what happens to us."

What does it mean?

The lesson states this is a legal problem with legal language? Is it?

What is happening in the lesson is a classic error many people make when reading Scripture—they read a Scripture and believe it is communicating God's truth. Not in these verses, in these verses what is being communicated is Jeremiah's heart, position, attitude. And Jeremiah was a sinful human being, with a selfish carnal nature in need of healing. He, like Jonah, Peter, David, Saul and so many more of God's prophets had sin problems and understanding problems and often wanted vengeance upon their enemies.

Remember Psalm 137:8,9:



Babylon, you will be destroyed. Happy are those who pay you back for what you have done to us- 9 who take your babies and smash them against a rock.

Should we take this to be an expression of God's will?

But God contrasts Jeremiah's plea with his answer in verses 7-12:

"I will forsake my house, abandon my inheritance; I will give the one I love into the hands of her enemies. [What does God do? He sets them free to their own choice. And what happens when God sets free? Why does He do this? What is the only action love can take when one insists, after all entreaties, on leaving?] 8 My inheritance has become to me like a lion in the forest. She roars at me; therefore I hate her. [What does this mean? He hates the separation, the hostility, the rebellion in the heart that prevents them from unity with God, thus God hates watching the pain and suffering and death which is the only outcome of separation from Him] 9 Has not my inheritance become to me like a speckled bird of prey that other birds of prey surround and attack? Go and gather all the wild beasts; bring them to devour. ¹⁰ Many shepherds will ruin my vineyard and trample down my field; they will turn my pleasant field into a desolate wasteland. [What is this referring to? To Israel being trampled by paganism and rebellion]¹¹ It will be made a wasteland, parched and desolate before me; the whole land will be laid waste because there is no one who cares. 12 Over all the barren heights in the desert destroyers will swarm, for the sword of the Lord will devour from one end of the land to the other; no one will be safe. [What is the sword of the Lord? It is what the truth brings, the unavoidable results of truth. If one rejects God and chooses a path without Him, what truthfully happens? Destruction, but not at God's hand!]

THURSDAY

Read fourth paragraph, "Jeremiah understood, too..." What does this remind you of? This is a legal religion, feast days, Sabbath keeping, dressing rigidly, observing rituals, washing correctly, doing communion, claiming legal payments, all designed to legally merit some benefit from the ruling authority.

The last sentence states, "They were looking only to remove the results of the problem, not the problem itself, which was their sin and disobedience."

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This is exactly what Penal Substitution Theology leads to, a legal accounting to get rid of the penalty, which in that construct is the legal (just) punishment for our sins. Thus, we get rid of the record of our sins, and get declared righteous, "even though we are not." It is a fraud, a grand deception, which keeps good people trapped in addition and violence cycles.

The Good News is that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, not the punishment for sin. (Jn 1:29) God wants to give us new hearts and right spirits, not new records. He wants to heal our minds and characters not give us laundered clothing.

The last paragraph quotes Jeremiah stating, "our iniquities testify against us." What does this mean?

How do our iniquities testify against us?

If we claim to be healthy, but are sick with smallpox would the small pox lesions testify against us?

FRIDAY

The question of trying to make sense of evil comes up and they quote EGW, read first two paragraphs, "In this regard..." Did EGW say that evil and the pain and suffering caused by it is not understandable? No, she said the REASON for evil is not understandable. But evil is understandable, it is the violation of God's design law and it results in pain and suffering.

For instance, it is understandable that if a person pokes themselves in the eye with a knife they will suffer pain, loss of vision, and perhaps death. But, why would someone do this? What reason can be given that makes it right or understandable? None—there is no reason for sin, but we can understand that sin is deviation from God's design and always results in pain and suffering and unless remedied—death.



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The God-Shaped Brain is now available in Korean and is available at this website: http://book.naver.com/bookdb/book_detail.nhn?bid=9519886

The Remedy – Dr. Jennings' New Testament Paraphrase – ALL GLITCHES NOW FIXED in the IOS Version! So please UPDATE to latest version.

The Journal of the Watcher is now available as a movie in itunes for everyone without ios or android, you can now get it in itunes.

October 24: Dr. Jennings will be speaking in Puyallup, WA:

- Friday, October 23rd at the North Hill SDA Fellowship Church at 7:00PM. Located at: 10106 36th St. E., Edgewood, WA.
- Saturday, October 24th at the Washington State Fairgrounds in Puyallup in the Expo Hall. (10:00AM 4:00 PM)
- For more information email, <u>Godandyourbrain@icloud.com</u>.
- There is also a God and Your Brain Events page on Facebook.

January 9, 2016: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Carmichael SDA church in Sacramento, California.

January 29-30, 2016: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at The Haven Church in St. Helena, CA.

March 11-12, 2016: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Village Church, College Place, WA.

April 1-2, 2016: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Spring Branch Hispanic SDA church, Houston, TX.