



Jeremiah 4Q 2015 Lesson 5 More Woe for the Prophet

SABBATH

Read memory text: “O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: Thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, Every one mocketh me.” Jer 20:7 KJV

- Should we take the Bible as it reads?
- Do we believe if the Bible says something it must be true?
- What do we do with passages like this?
- What is the purpose of the Bible?
- Was Jeremiah inspired when he wrote the book of Jeremiah?
- How does inspiration work? Does it mean everything he wrote was directly from God?
- Does it mean that Jeremiah understood everything correctly?
- Should we believe something written by one of God’s prophets over our own understanding of God’s character, methods and principles?
- The Bible says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;” Prv 3:5 Does this mean we are not to understand or think?
- What does it mean to not trust our own understanding, and how do we understand texts like Jeremiah 20:7?
- Who has a clearer understanding of Scripture—the ones who wrote it, or those Spirit led persons who read it years later? One Bible commentator thinks those who read it later have clearer understanding—this is from the book, the *Desire of Ages*:
 - They realized that the mighty God, clad in the garb of humanity, was among them. Jesus rejoiced that though this knowledge was not possessed by the wise and prudent, it had been revealed to these humble men. Often as He had presented the Old Testament Scriptures, and showed their application to Himself and His work of atonement, they had been awakened by His Spirit, and lifted into a heavenly atmosphere. **Of the spiritual truths spoken by the prophets they had a clearer understanding than had the original writers themselves.** Hereafter they would read the Old Testament Scriptures, not as the doctrines of the scribes and Pharisees, not as the utterances of wise men who were dead, but as a new revelation from God. {DA 494.3}

What is the purpose of Scripture? This is a key question to understand what is written there.

- Scripture’s primary purpose is to reveal the truth about God to us
- But what is the setting?



- It is the context of a war over lies about God that allege He misuses power and cannot be trusted and in a world in which people are filled with selfishness
- So, what does Scripture reveal? God dealing with people who are infected with fear and selfishness and who have many false ideas operating in their heads. We see God, always patient, gracious, kind, loving, working to heal and save, but we also see God's own helpers on earth are all infected with fear and selfishness and at times struggle with these symptoms which cause them to have doubts and uncertainties and even choose poorly:
 - Abraham—doubts the promise and takes Hagar, and lies to Pharaoh—but is father of the faithful
 - Jacob—doubts the promise and connives with mother to deceive father—but is father of the twelve tribes
 - David—struggled with fear and selfishness, lusts, cheats, then murders to protect self—but is a man after God's own heart
 - Solomon—pride, lust, and even worshipped false gods—but after all this is one of the holy men who wrote Scripture
 - Elijah—ran away in fear and discouragement wishing to die—but was taken to heaven without seeing death
 - Jonah—was a racist who wanted the Ninevites killed—but was used of God to save a city
 - Peter—denied Jesus three times with cursing and the rest ran away in fear for self—but was an Apostle of Christ

In Scripture we find real people dealing with the reality of the sin condition, which infects their hearts, tempts them, and at times discourages and even wins momentary battles in their lives. But, we also see God, who loves us for who we are, who understands our weakness, our infected state, and has a plan, worked out through Jesus, to heal and restore all who trust Him!

Read second paragraph **TUESDAY's** lesson: "What comes after, though, comes directly from Jeremiah's own heart, written down under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It is the heartfelt cry of a human being who simply doesn't like the situation he is in and is crying out about it."

What did the Holy Spirit inspire Jeremiah to write? The truth of his own heart's struggles, not a reflection of cosmic reality or God's actions!

This is critical to understand when reading Scripture—far too many people read proof-texting style, find a verse, the Bible says it, well there you have it.



SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, “Removed as we...” This is well said... any examples from the OT you would like to explore?

The lesson asks us to read Jeremiah 23:14,15:

And among the prophets of Jerusalem
I have seen something horrible:
They commit adultery and live a lie.
They strengthen the hands of evildoers,
so that no one turns from his wickedness.
They are all like Sodom to me;
the people of Jerusalem are like Gomorrah.”
¹⁵ Therefore, this is what the Lord Almighty says concerning the prophets:
**“I will make them eat bitter food
and drink poisoned water,**
because from the prophets of Jerusalem
ungodliness has spread throughout the land.”

What do you understand they were doing? What is the adultery to which the prophet speaks?

Many people take the Bible just as it reads and read sexual misconduct in this text, is that the problem?

What is adultery? It is betrayal! It is giving your heart, devotion, loyalty to another and betraying the one to whom you are committed.

From the SDA Bible Commentary on this passage:

The hypocritical boldness of the false prophets that led them to prophesy in the Lord’s name while they transgressed the Lord’s commandments was more “horrible” to Jeremiah than even the open worship of Baal. Because of the very nature of the sin of hypocrisy, there is more hope for the open sinner than for hypocrites. (Nichol, F. D. (Ed.). (1977). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Vol. 4, p. 441). Review and Herald Publishing Association.)

What do you think of God’s words to *make* them eat bitter food and poisoned water? To what is this referring?



Bread and water are symbols of God's word and Spirit—thus if they reject the truth from God and prefer lies, they will receive that which they have chosen, poison and bitterness.

Why do you think the Bible says it as if God is going to use His power to make it happen that way?

Any other examples of this and why?

This is because of the maturity level of the audience to whom God is speaking. He is speaking to people operating at level 1 moral development, where right and wrong is determined by reward and punishment. At this level the ruler to worship is the one with the most power because that ruler can punish all who disagree and reward those who agree. Thus, God presents Himself as powerful and throughout much of the OT you see God's spokespersons using such language. Remember Micaiah talking to Ahab?

Micaiah continued, "Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the host of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left."²⁰ And the Lord said, "Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?"

"One suggested this, and another that."²¹ Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the Lord and said, "I will entice him."

²² "By what means?" the Lord asked.

"I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets," he said.

"You will succeed in enticing him," said the Lord. "Go and do it."

²³ "So now the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The Lord has decreed disaster for you." 1Kings 22:19-23

Here again is Scripture—do we take it as it reads, or do we understand something else is happening here? Does God lie? Do God's agents lie?

Who is the father of lies? Satan—so what is going on in this passage?

God, through Micaiah, is speaking to Ahab, king of Israel. God is merciful; God wants to avoid destruction of His people; God wants to send a message of warning to Ahab to cause Ahab to reconsider his choice and not go to war. So, how will God have to communicate to a worshipper of Baal? With a message that God is powerful and therefore God takes ownership, in this context, of the false message and Ahab is given a warning that the other prophets have lied and he will be killed if he goes to war.



Read Jeremiah 15:26-31:

“Among my people are wicked men who lie in wait like men who snare birds and like those **who set traps to catch men.** ²⁷ Like cages full of birds, their houses are full of deceit; they have become rich and powerful ²⁸ and have grown fat and sleek. Their evil deeds have no limit; **they do not plead the case of the fatherless to win it, they do not defend the rights of the poor.** ²⁹ Should I not punish them for this?” declares the Lord. “Should I not avenge myself on such a nation as this? ³⁰ “A horrible and shocking thing has happened in the land: ³¹ The prophets prophesy lies, the priests rule by their own authority, and my people love it this way. But what will you do in the end?”

They set traps to catch people—what is this talking about? What kind of traps?

- ponzi schemes?
- bait and switch?
- emails of missionary stranded and needs money?
- emails of won millions of dollars but held up for taxes and if pay the \$10,000 tax will get the money?
- emails purporting to be from your credit card company and reporting someone has misused your card and needing to get the number and security code to ensure it is in your possession?
- What about religious traps?
 - How about you have alien neural programming in your brain causing you to do bad things and if you want to live free you must get this foreign programming out of your brain, it will only cost you \$10,000 per treatment session to get this done?
 - How about systems that say if you donate we will send you a healing cloth that we have prayed over?
 - How about systems that say God is wrathful and angry and something must be done to turn away His anger and wrath?
 - From George Knight’s book, *The Cross of Christ*, which many theologians hold up as the best explanation of the atonement, we read:
 - “*God is angry and His anger is personal and active...* God’s wrath must be propitiated or turned away from the sinner. That was one aim of Christ’s self-sacrifice on the cross.” p 63,64 (emphasis in original text)
 - “The second Armageddon engagement [end of 1000 years] finds God executing His ultimate wrath not only on Satan, but on those sinners who have refused to accept (1) His principles into their lives and (2) Christ’s vicarious sacrificial propitiation (the basis of grace) that turned aside the divine wrath (judgment on sin).” p. 107



We find ourselves in the same position today as the Israelites in Jeremiah's day...people purporting to speak for God, yet telling lies about Him. This view of God is Satan's lies about God, it is all based on accepting the lie that God's law is like the laws fallen human beings make, rules without inherent consequence, which requires enforcement of penalties.

- It makes God out to be the source of pain, suffering and death.
- It undermines trust in God.
- It leads to theologies that function to protect us from God
- Here are the lies of this view:
 - God's law is imposed
 - God must inflict punishment
 - God is angry and must have something done to him to turn His anger and wrath aside or else He will lash out and destroy His children
 - Christ has a more gracious and tender character than the Father and died to save us from the Father
 - Grace wouldn't exist if Jesus didn't die to propitiate the Father
 - Divine wrath is the same as judgment on sin
 - Judgment is judicial

We, today, must learn to think for ourselves, must come to know God as Jesus revealed Him to be, must come to know God's law as the law of love, the design protocols reality functions upon and know our place in the history of the world, so that we can participate with God in telling the truth about Him to free people from enslavement to this false view—just as Jeremiah and the prophets of old were trying to do for Israel!

Back to the Jeremiah passage: What is the idea being expressed in “they do not plead the case of the fatherless to win it, they do not defend the rights of the poor”?

This is saying they are not “just” which is “right” or “righteous,” because righteousness is being and doing what is right or just. And the right or just way to be is like Jesus or God, and God is love. So God's justice is always an expression of love, which is restorative and entails all actions designed to deliver people from oppression, no punish oppressors.

But if that is so, how do we understand verse 29: “Should I not punish them for this?” declares the Lord. “Should I not avenge myself on such a nation as this?”

What is God's punishment? And what is His vengeance?



God's punishment is exactly what love does—it let's go to reap what one chooses, thus God warned them that He would punish by bringing the Babylonians, i.e. God would remove His protective hand at their insistence to be free from Him and they would end up slaves in Babylon—this is the punishment that sin itself brings, it is not inflicted by God.

And what then of vengeance? What would be the vengeance of God?

Before we read the Bible text, what was the result of their going into captivity? Did it result in humbling them and a remnant being saved and returning to the land?

Therefore the Lord, the Lord Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, declares: “Ah, I will get relief from my foes and **avenge myself on my enemies.** ²⁵ I will turn my hand against you; **I will thoroughly purge away your dross and remove all your impurities.** Isa 1:24,25

What is God's vengeance? Upon what does God take vengeance? God takes vengeance upon sin like a doctor does disease! God's vengeance is upon sin! God work's to save sinners, not punish them!

Second to the last sentence in the Sunday's lesson states, “That despite all these evils, and more, He was willing to forgive them, heal them, and even restore them.”

Willing to forgive, does that mean He didn't forgive, refused to forgive, or remained unforgiving in some way?

This sounds again like viewing through human imposed law lenses where forgiveness takes on legal parameters and cannot be extended without proper legal aspects, including confession and repentance on part of the offender.

However, under design law, we realize that God forgives always, but His forgiveness doesn't always result in the offender accepting into their hearts His forgiveness—think of those who crucified Christ. He forgave them, but they wouldn't open their hearts, thus their condition remained in an unforgiven state, but God had forgiven them thus God was and is forgiving.

MONDAY

Read top paragraph, “The job...” Why do you think this is the case? What is it about us humans, that makes it hard to hear what God's spokespersons are saying?



Consider, however, Revelation 7, at the end of time the Bible predicts that the message given by God's spokespersons will result in a huge multitude from all over the world accepting the truth and being saved—what makes the difference?

- It will be given in a time of great tribulation or stress so people will be seeking answers
- It will be the most complete, evidenced-based, sensible and reasonable presentation of the truth about God ever given in human history
 - Even what Jesus presented when on earth was couched in parables, metaphors and symbols—but the final message is to be articulated in the most clear, reality based language possible.

In Jeremiah chapter 20 verses 1-6, Jeremiah prophesies against Pashur, telling him he will be taken off into captivity and he along with his family and friends will all die. Then the lesson asks, at the bottom, “Imagine hearing something like that prophesied against you. What would you think your initial reaction would be, as opposed to what it should be? (What should it be, anyway?)”

Isn't the first question—who is giving the prophecy? Is everyone who claims they come with a message from the Lord, really speaking for God? If a message is from God—doesn't God somehow make that apparent?

When Elijah faced the 450 priests of Baal didn't God make it apparent which of the spokespersons spoke for Him?

Was it only on that day with fire, or had God been making it apparent for some time? How?

- In the books of Moses with explicit guidelines and instructions regarding truth and lies
- With 3.5 years of drought

Other examples? When we read in Scripture where Jeremiah or other prophets say God deceives or lies—should we take this at face value and conclude, “they are speaking for God, who am I to question?” Or, something else?

So if someone prophesies against you, what is a healthy reaction?

- From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks—consider the source, who they are, their motives, what does it say about them?
- Step back and humble talk to God yourself and ask God to lead you to know the truth—and study God's word in Scripture, Nature and Experience to evaluate if your life is living in harmony with God's design



- Other courses of action?

But what about the church, Jeremiah's prophecy was about the entire nation, what about saying such things about the church today?

WEDNESDAY

The first paragraph, starting in the middle states:

“As stated before, the God these prophets served is perfect; the prophets who served Him were not. They, like the rest of us, were sinners in need of the **righteousness of Christ to be credited to them by faith** (see *Rom 3:22*). From Noah to Peter, and everyone in between, all were sin-damaged creatures whose only hope was, as Ellen G. White says, to go before the Lord and say: ‘I have no **merit** or goodness whereby I may **claim salvation**, but I present before God the **all-atoning blood of the spotless Lamb of God**, which taketh away the **sin of the world**. This is my only **plea**. The **name of Jesus gives me access to the Father**. His ear, His heart, is open to my faintest pleading, and He supplies my deepest necessities.’ *Faith and Works*, p. 106.”

The lesson authors use language crafted by and is an outgrowth of accepting the imposed law construct, the false legal gospel that came from the Dark Ages in these words “the righteousness of Christ is credited to them by faith.”

I looked at every use in EGW's writings of “credited” and not once does she use it to suggest Christ's righteousness is credited to us.

In the book, *The Cross of Christ*, by George Knight, we have a typical presentation of justification based on Satan's view of God's law, the idea that God's law functions like human law, rules imposed that require punishment.

Paul coined the metaphor of justification to meet the problem of the legal curse of the law with its death penalty...justification brings us to the courtroom... Is a person righteous or guilty before the divine judge? In Romans 3 justification does not mean “to make righteous,” but rather “to declare righteous.” “The root idea in justification,” George Eldon Ladd writes, “is the declaration of God, the righteous judge, that the man who believes in Christ, sinful though he may be,... is viewed as being righteous, because in Christ he has come into a righteous relationship with God.”... One would expect a just God to punish those who deserve it. That is what justice means. p. 71, 72.



This is the typical view one holds when one believes God's law functions like human law, but an entire new reality opens upon us when we realize the truth that God is Creator and His law is the protocols upon which reality functions, deviations of which are incompatible with life.

Biblical justice as we have pointed out many times is delivering the oppressed, not punishing the oppressor. This idea that sin is breaking rules which requires the ruling authority to inflict punishment is satanic!

Before I read any more EGW quotes about righteousness by faith (which is justification), let's decode the quote the lesson used. First, note there is much symbolic language or ill-defined language:

- Merit—some objective fact or state of being which is worthy of reward, acknowledgment, praise
- Claim—to demand by right or by inherent fact
- Salvation—which law lens? If one uses imposed law then this takes on legal connotations, but design law this is restoration and healing
- Atonement—which law lens? appease, or restore to unity?
- Blood—symbol for life
- Lamb of God—sinless Jesus
- Sin of the world—which law lens? If imposed this is read to mean every bad act was placed upon Christ and God punished Christ for those bad acts. Under design law we realize Christ took away the terminal condition, the sinful state of being was removed by Christ!
- Plea—which law lens? Impose law then we read this as a legal plea, “Based on the innocence of Jesus who paid my penalty, I plead not guilty.” But through design law we read this as a patient calling out to the doctor “save me!”
- Name of Jesus—legal view—the legal accomplishments of Jesus, speak the right name and we are granted access because Jesus has met the legal requirements in our behalf. Design law we realize name is symbolic of character and thus we have Christ's character within—it is only those who are like Christ who can actually enter God's presence, why? Because the others don't want to be there, it is torture to them because their condition is out of harmony with God, thus they run and hide and beg mountains to cover them!

So in decoded language we read:

‘I have no **healthiness of character** or goodness of heart whereby I may **claim to be in harmony with God's design and thus eternally well**, but I present before God the **all-healing and restoring life of the perfect Son of God**, which **removes all defects and deviations**



from God's design. This is my only hope of life, for which I call out in need. The character of Jesus heals me and enables me to enter the Father's presence.'

So the Bible teaches that justification is a change in the heart of the believer from our natural state of enmity (Rom 8:7) to a state of trust. Romans 4 states, Abraham trusted God and after his heart changed from distrust to trust, then God recognized him as righteous. One has to read into the text some legal accounting or crediting elements that do not exist in God's reality.

Here are several EGW quotes that make this quite clear:

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.]

Many who hold to the imposed law concept, and thus to the false legal view, have made a big deal out of the difference between "imputed" and "imparted" righteousness. Notice EGWs use of imputed:

The great work that is wrought for the sinner who is spotted and stained by evil is the work of justification. **By Him who speaketh truth he is declared righteous. The Lord imputes unto the believer the righteousness of Christ and pronounces him righteous before the universe. He transfers his sins to Jesus, the sinner's representative, substitute, and surety.** Upon Christ He lays the iniquity of every soul that believeth. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Corinthians 5:21. . . . {FLB 112.4} [Those who hold the legal view want to stop right hear, with this very symbolic language, rather than allowing the author who wrote those words to explain.]

Through repentance and faith we are rid of sin, and look unto the Lord our righteousness. Jesus suffered, the just for the unjust. . . . {FLB 112.5} [note we are rid of sin, not the punishment of God for sin]



Having ***made us righteous*** through the imputed righteousness of Christ, God pronounces us just, and treats us as just. [what comes first? The actual change of heart of the believer from distrust to trust, which is setting the heart right, which is justification.] He looks upon us as His dear children. Christ works against the power of sin, and where sin abounded, grace much more abounds. Where does sin abound, in record books or in hearts? Where is Christ working against the power of sin, in the courtrooms of heaven or in characters of people? Is the power of sin at work in heaven? Or is He working in our hearts and minds? "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Romans 5:1, 2. {Faith I Live By 112.6}

By beholding we become changed, morally assimilated to the One who is perfect in character. By receiving His imputed righteousness, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we become like Him. {God's Amazing Grace 96.4}

Abundant grace has been provided that the believing soul may be kept free from sin; for all heaven, with its limitless resources, has been placed at our command... In ourselves we are sinners; but in Christ we are righteous. Having made us righteous through the imputed righteousness of Christ, God pronounces us just, and treats us as just. He looks upon us as His dear children. Christ works against the power of sin, and where sin abounded, grace much more abounds. Where does sin abound, in books or hearts? Where does grace abound? {AG 181.4}

We aim too low. The mark is much higher. Our minds need expansion, that we may comprehend the significance of the provision of God. We are to reflect the highest attributes of the character of God. . . . **The law of God is the exalted standard to which we are to attain through the imputed righteousness of Christ.** {Our High Calling 364.2}

He would have us comprehend something of His love in giving His Son to die that He might counteract evil, **remove the defiling stains of sin from the workmanship of God, and reinstate the lost, elevating and ennobling the soul to its original purity through Christ's imputed righteousness.** That I May Know Him 206

Revelation teaches that the entire world will end up worshipping Satan, other than a remnant who remain loyal to Jesus and adhere to God's commandments—what does this mean?



The entire world will worship a god who imposes laws and must punish law breakers, who have accepted the legal payment of their sins to appease and propitiate the heavenly judge—all except those who are loyal to Jesus and live in harmony with His law of love!

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “Despite all the evil...” Does God every stop giving people a chance to repent?

Which law lens do we look through?

What is the obstacle that stops people from repenting? Their own hard hearts!

FRIDAY

Read top paragraph, “In Jeremiah 18....” If God knows the future choices of people, why warn them when He knows they won’t listen?

Read and discuss question 1



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, Godandyourbrain@icloud.com.
- 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.