



## The Book of Matthew Lesson 7 2Q 2016 Lord of Jews and Gentiles

### SABBATH

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What do you think of the title? Why do we even have such a title? Why isn't the title, Lord of Humanity?

What was one of the most common titles Jesus gave Himself? Wasn't it "son of man"? Which means, human being, He didn't call himself, "son of Judah."

Why didn't Jesus refer to Himself as son of Abraham, or son of Jacob?

Where does this division of Jew and Gentile come from?

God's calling of Abraham and promising to make a great nation from his descendants.

So, for what was Abraham called?

He was called for a mission—what mission? To be the avenue through which the Savior, Messiah, Redeemer, Remedy for the entire human race would come—and in that mission to develop a group who were to be prepared to meet the Messiah and assist in saving the entire world.

So understanding that calling—who would be considered descendants of Abraham? Anyone who trusts God and thereby assists God in accomplishing God's purpose in saving all humanity.

Any Bible texts support this position?

Rahab and Ruth—did were they descendants of Jacob? Did they become part of the Jewish nation? Were they even in the ancestry of Jesus? Who then is a Jew?

Romans 4:16,17:

<sup>16</sup> Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. <sup>17</sup> As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were. Rom 4:16,17 NIV

What do you hear?



- What does “of the law” mean? What law? This is a reference to the Law of Moses, or the Levitical law and is referring to those who were part of the acting troupe known as Israel and Judah—those responsible for acting out the play in the theater known at the Jewish Temple
- What does “of the faith” mean? Those who trusted God, like Abraham, but who were not actors in the Jewish theater, just as Abraham never acted in the Jewish theater.
- What does it mean “gives life to the dead”? Who is this referring to? Those who are in the terminal condition of sinfulness, deviant from God’s design i.e. dead in trespass and sin—the entire human race after Adam’s sin.
- What does it mean, “calls things that are not as though they were”? Calls those that were not part of the acting troupe, not part of the genetic descendants of Abraham, as though they were because while they didn’t take part in the symbolic acting out of the plan of salvation, they did partake of the genuine Remedy—Jesus Christ!

So, Romans 4:16,17 from *The Remedy*:

<sup>16</sup>Therefore the restoration to a perfect state of being and the inheritance of eternal life on a renewed earth come by trusting the One who made the promise to do it. This transformation is accomplished by God’s graciousness and is guaranteed to all the children of Abraham—not only his genetic descendants, who were given the written diagnostic code, but also to his spiritual descendants who, just like him, trust God. Abraham is the father of all who trust God.<sup>17</sup>As it is written: “I have made you the father of many different ethnic groups.” The God in whom Abraham trusted—the Creator God who is the source of all life and who calls things into existence from nothingness—considers all of us who trust him to be descendants of Abraham.

Read memory text: “I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles.” (Isa 42:6)

What is the meaning of this text? To whom is it referring? It is referring to Jesus who is the Savior of all humanity, not just the Jews.

## **SUNDAY**

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The lesson is about feeding of the five thousand, which counted only the men, so the mass of people was much larger than five thousand.

Just before the feeding of the five thousand John the Baptist was beheaded, Jesus hears the news, and retreats to a desolate area, and the crowds follow him there.

Read third paragraph, “There is, however,…” What do you think of the idea that this was more than meeting immediate physical needs, but also a fulfillment of sending manna from heaven?

How did Jesus further develop this idea?



I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. <sup>48</sup> I am the bread of life. <sup>49</sup> Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. <sup>50</sup> But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. <sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” John 6:47-51

How did the Jews interpret Jesus’ words? They took them literally—and what reaction did they have?

What does it mean to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus? How do we partake of the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus today?

Is it in communion service? Or, is the communion service only symbolic of the reality?

Do we risk similar problems that the Jews had of getting stuck in metaphor and failing to experience the reality to which the metaphor points?

What is the reality? What is the real bread and wine the real flesh and blood?

Do you feel confident in drawing your own conclusion that Jesus is the Word of God—the Word made *flesh*, and that we ingest the flesh/bread when we study God’s word. The truth that Jesus brought/revealed becomes to us the meat, the substance, the building blocks of our thoughts, our ideas, our beliefs, which for our attitudes and help shape our characters.

Christ, the truth of God, is the source of all truth and thus feasting on Christ, is partaking truth, which dispels lies, falsehood, distortion, misunderstanding, confusion. The truth changes our thinking, our ideas, our conception of reality, and thus the truth that Christ reveals and brings is the data, the actual particles of information that our concepts, ideas, and beliefs are built out of. So, just like nutrients for the body, the truth from Jesus is real food for the mind!

Can we feel comfortable with this and realize that there is no healing power, no saving effect from eating physical bread and wine? These are only symbols to remind us to *THINK!*

The Word of God contains our life insurance policy. **To eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God means to study the Word and to carry that Word into the life in obedience to all its precepts.** Those who thus partake of the Son of God **become partakers of the divine nature, one with Christ.** They breathe a holy atmosphere, in which only the soul can truly live. They carry in their lives an assurance of the holy principles received from the Word—their lives are worked by the power of the Holy Spirit, and they have an earnest of the immortality that will be theirs through the death and resurrection of Christ. Should the earthly body decay, the principles of their faith sustain them, for they are partakers of the divine



nature. Because Christ was raised from the dead, they grasp the pledge of their resurrection, and eternal life is their reward. {Hvn 54.2}

As I understand it, bread and flesh symbolize the truth, the Word of God, and the blood/wine, symbolize the perfect life/character of Christ that we receive, AFTER we have comprehended enough truth about God that we trust Him enough to open our hearts and allow in the Holy Spirit, who takes the character of Christ and reproduces it in us. So it “is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me.”

The Comforter is called "the Spirit of truth." His work is to define and maintain the truth. He first dwells in the heart as the Spirit of truth, and thus He becomes the Comforter. There is comfort and peace in the truth, but no real peace or comfort can be found in falsehood. It is through false theories and traditions that Satan gains his power over the mind. By directing men to false standards, he misshapes the character. Through the Scriptures the Holy Spirit speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the heart. Thus He exposes error, and expels it from the soul. It is by the Spirit of truth, working through the word of God, that Christ subdues His chosen people to Himself. {DA 671.1}

So, after Jesus feeds the crowd, what begins to happen in the crowd?

The crowd begins to foment the idea of proclaiming Jesus King and forcing Him onto the throne.

How did Jesus respond? He told the disciples to get in the boat and head to the other shore while he dismissed the crowd.

Why? What does God want from us? What is God's goal? What is He trying to achieve?

He wants our love, our trust, our devotion, our confidence in Him and His ways, our loyalty. Can God get this by displays of might and power? What do displays of might and power do? They shut down thinking, they inspire a sense of being overwhelmed so one surrenders to power, to intimidation, but what is the problem with such surrender? Any supernatural being can cause such a reaction—but only God possesses truth, only God is worthy of our trust.

What can God not create? God can create sinless intelligent beings, but can God create, by use of power and might, love, devotion, loyalty?

God can create programmed robots, that would be reliable, but can robots love? Can robots choose to be loyal? Can robots adore? Can robots be devoted?

God cannot create mature, loyal, devoted, trustworthy beings capable of genuine love—because character cannot be created, character must be formed by the exercise of the free will choices of the intelligent beings.



So Jesus, when He saw they were following Him for the miracles, stopped for a while.

On the road to Emmaus He did the same thing:

He maintained His disguise till He had interpreted the Scriptures, and had led them to an intelligent faith in His life, His character, His mission to earth, and His death and resurrection. He wished the truth to take firm root in their minds, not because it was supported by His personal testimony, but because the typical law, and the prophets of the Old Testament, agreeing with the facts of His life and death, presented unquestionable evidence of that truth. When the object of His labors with the two disciples was gained, He revealed Himself to them, that their joy might be full, and then vanished from their sight (ST Oct. 6, 1909). {5BC 1125.12}

God uses the methods He does because it is the only way to achieve our full restoration to beings in His image!

**In the work of redemption there is no compulsion.** No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, **man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom. The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself.** True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan's control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, **the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit,** and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God. {DA 466.4}

## MONDAY

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The lesson focuses on the events after Jesus dismissed the crowd. The disciples were on the water and Jesus walks out to them. Peter walks on the water, but turns back and loses sight of Jesus, begins to sink, cries out and is saved. Once in the boat Jesus calms the storm and they are amazed.

What do we learn from this story? How did the disciples first respond when they saw Jesus walking on the water?

They were afraid—why?

Was Jesus doing something threatening? Was Jesus a danger to them? Then why were they afraid? Because Jesus doing something outside their scope of understanding; He was Jesus doing something unexpected. Was Jesus presenting Himself in a way they did not anticipate and thus they failed to recognize Him?



Does this ever happen to us? Do we ever fail to recognize God, or God's movements, because God is moving in a way that is outside our expectations, comfort zone, understanding and thus we become afraid of what we are seeing—even though it is the movements of God?

What about those who are afraid new ideas, a perspective of God they have not heard before, perhaps a God who doesn't use power to threaten and kill? Now, isn't it interesting that those who hold the view of God that He tortures and kills His enemies, are afraid when a God of love who doesn't torture and kill is presented. Why are they afraid?

Is it because their minds have settled into a certain view that new ideas are seen as threatening? Do people ever restrict God to conform with their limited understanding?

As I was preparing this lesson I came across a quote I had read before, but realized it was applicable to this discussion and demonstrates this has been a problem throughout human history. This is from one of the founders of our church:

**There is no excuse** for any one in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all **our expositions of Scripture** are without an error. The fact that **certain doctrines** have been held as truth for many years **by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible.** Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. **No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation...** **There are those who oppose everything that is not in accordance with their own ideas,** and by so doing they endanger their eternal interest as verily as did the Jewish nation in their rejection of Christ. **The Lord designs** that our opinions shall be put to the test, that we may see the necessity of closely examining the **living oracles** [what are living oracles? Does it suggest anything about the kind of law involved? Would it not be a living law, the law of life, the law of love, the protocols reality actually operate upon?] to see whether or not we are **in the faith...** [in the faith, what does this mean? If their opinions are not in harmony with the *living* oracles then does that mean they are not in the faith?] {RH, December 20, 1892 par. 1}

From the description of the Laodiceans, it is evident that many were deceived in their estimate of their spiritual condition. They regarded themselves as rich, as possessing all the knowledge and grace that was needed; **but yet they lacked the gold of faith and love, the white raiment of Christ's righteousness.** [what is the gold? Trust and love! and what is the white clothing? a Christlike character] They were destitute and poverty-stricken, walking in sparks of their own kindling, and preparing to lie down in sorrow... [ Why were they destitute? Because they didn't have trust and love and Christ's character reproduced within—what would they cling to instead? What could be held to instead? Could it be a legal pardon? A legal payment? A legal claim that has no power to transform the inner person? what does sparks of their own kindling mean?] {RH, December 20, 1892 par. 2}



**In unmistakable language our position is presented before us.** Apart from Christ we have no merit, no righteousness. Our sinfulness, our weakness, our human imperfections make it impossible that we should appear before God, **unless we are clothed in Christ's spotless righteousness.** We are to be found in him, not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness which is through Christ. [ **What does this mean? We have a terminal condition that we cannot heal. Jesus provides a real remedy that cures our terminal condition. DA 762** ] {RH, December 20, 1892 par. 3}

But there is hope for every one; for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." **If the love of God is not appreciated, and does not become an abiding principle in the hard heart to soften and subdue the soul, we are utterly lost.**[**actual transformation, not legal representation and payment**] **The Lord has no reserve power with which to influence man.** He can give no greater manifestation of his love than that which he has given. **Heaven's richest gift has been freely offered for your acceptance.** [How do you hear this? **The richest gift was paid to God to get God to accept you, or the richest gift was given to get you to accept the truth about God and trust Him? Well notice the next sentence**] **If the exhibition of the love of Jesus does not melt and subdue your heart, by what means can you be reached?** Has the love of Christ failed to bring forth an earnest response of love and gratitude? Then let it not remain in this condition of hardness another day. **Open your heart, and receive Christ, the best gift of heaven.** Let not cruel unbelief lead you to refuse the heaven-sent gift. Let not Christ say of you, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." {RH, December 20, 1892 par. 4}

## TUESDAY

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Read the top dark section, "Therefore, the Lord said..." What is it the Lord wants? He wants transformation of the hearts of people—what were the people doing? They were being religious—they were saying the right words, attending the right ceremonies, observing the right day, eating the right food, paying the right tithe, speaking the right words, but what were they not doing? They were not partaking of the remedy, they were not being transformed in heart to be like Jesus.

How much of Christianity is stuck in the same process? Why? Because at the root, the problem is a false diagnosis that sin is a legal problem that requires a legal solution. So people focus on behavior, on bad deeds, and on teaching ideas that focus on getting our legal punishment taken by someone else so we can be legally pardoned.

But such a religion doesn't change the heart!

Matthew 15-1-20 focuses on ritual and how the Jews thought ritual actually mattered—they thought it really mattered what one ate, whether one washed their hands or not before they ate etc.



Do we struggle with any of these issues today? Do we ever feel that we have sinned if we eat the wrong food?

Food cannot change the character—but food can undermine the ability to form a healthy character—how? Unhealthy diet can undermine health, and the sicker we are the more self-focused we become. The sicker we are the more difficult it is to be able to minister to other, to actually operate as a giver, in harmony with God’s design. It is not impossible to minister to others when sick, only that sickness makes it more difficult, thus unhealthy diet undermines our health, makes our brains less efficient so harder to learn, and makes our bodies less healthy which puts obstacles in our way of living lives in harmony with God’s plan, which can undermine character development.

Does that mean every morsel of food has moral value, is a moral decision of good or evil? Absolutely not! It is about the general trend of the life! The attitude of the heart, not the molecules of food in any given moment.

Read bottom pink section, “We all hate hypocrisy...” What ideas tend to increase hypocrisy?

What ideas decrease hypocrisy?

Anything that makes us more selfish will increase hypocrisy, anything that makes us more loving with concern for the welfare of others will decrease hypocrisy.

Operating on survival motives increase hypocrisy, operating on love decreases it.

Rule keeping increases hypocrisy, principle based living decrease hypocrisy.

Theologies that focus on rules, law, imposed law, incite fear and lead to more hypocrisy.

Theologies that focus on design, love, God’s character and methods enhance love, diminish fear and lead to genuine living.

## **WEDNESDAY**

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The lesson is about the story found in Matthew 15:21-28 of the woman who asks Jesus for help, but he initially rebuffs her.

Read paragraphs 3-5 “What if you...” What do you imagine Jesus’ tone was when He said this? Do you think He sounded harsh or was there something in His voice that suggested He was not closing the door on her?

Could His tone have been such that it sounded like He was reciting what others thought, but He Himself didn’t think this?



What do you think of the idea that Jesus was placing Israel in a priority position in the plan of salvation and others in a dependent status?

Did Israel have a priority position? A priority is something that is more important than others? Was Israel more important to God than other human beings?

Consider Isaiah 19:18-25:

<sup>18</sup> In that day five cities in Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the Lord Almighty. One of them will be called the City of Destruction.

<sup>19</sup> In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the heart of Egypt, and a monument to the Lord at its border. <sup>20</sup> It will be a sign and witness to the Lord Almighty in the land of Egypt. When they cry out to the Lord because of their oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and he will rescue them. <sup>21</sup> So the Lord will make himself known to the Egyptians, and in that day they will acknowledge the Lord. They will worship with sacrifices and grain offerings; they will make vows to the Lord and keep them. <sup>22</sup> The Lord will strike Egypt with a plague; he will strike them and heal them. They will turn to the Lord, and he will respond to their pleas and heal them.

<sup>23</sup> In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together. <sup>24</sup> In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. <sup>25</sup> The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, “Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance.”

From the SDA Bible Commentary on this passage: “The Israelites had come to look upon themselves as being the Lord’s people exclusively. They forgot that He was the God of all the earth and that He desired all nations to be saved. Isaiah here points out to the people of Israel their opportunities and responsibilities. The time was to come when heathen Assyria, as well as Egypt, would know God.”<sup>1</sup>

What was the priority for God? Saving all humanity, which means keeping open an avenue for the Messiah to be incarnate and fulfill His mission of revealing the truth about God, refuting the lies of Satan, exposing Satan, destroying the carnal nature, destroying death, and developing a perfect human character, thus becoming the Remedy to sin, i.e. fixing what Adam’s sin did to humanity so that every human being has access to God’s healing and can be saved.

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<sup>1</sup> Nichol, F. D. (Ed.). (1977). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Vol. 4, p. 185). Review and Herald Publishing Association.



## THURSDAY

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Read third paragraph, “Yet, this was always...” Yes, God has always been the God of all humanity and interested in saving all humanity. Israel was chosen to be the conduit through which Jesus would come to provide Remedy—Jesus has done that. Israel now has no further special place as a genetic group—they stand on equal footing with all humanity. God loves all human beings and wants all human beings to be saved!

The lesson asks us to read Romans 4:1-12: From *The Remedy*:

<sup>1</sup>What about our father Abraham: what did he understand about this issue?<sup>2</sup> If Abraham was somehow healed by his own efforts at keeping a set of rules or performing certain rituals, then he would have his own healing formula to promote, and would not need trust in God.<sup>3</sup> But what does the Scripture say? "Abraham trusted God, and his trust was recognized as righteousness because the distrust caused through Satan's lies had been removed, and through trust he was endowed with a new heart, right motives and Christlike principles."

<sup>4</sup>Now, when a person works, their wages are earned and are not a gift or an endowment.<sup>5</sup> But the person who doesn't try to earn God's Remedy by working for it, but instead comes to know and trust God—that person's trust is recognized as righteousness because the distrust caused by Satan's lies has been removed, and through trust they receive from God transformation of heart and experience God's own righteous character created within.<sup>6</sup> David says the exact same thing when he describes the blessedness of the person to whom God bestows his perfect cure without them working to earn it:

<sup>7</sup>"Happy are they whose wicked minds are restored to perfect purity, whose selfishness is eradicated.

<sup>8</sup>"Happy is the person whose infected heart the Lord transforms to perfection."

<sup>9</sup>Is this gracious re-creation of mind only for the small number of humans who have been physically circumcised, or is this for all humanity? We have been saying all along that Abraham trusted God—and his trust was recognized as righteousness because trust in God replaced mistrust of God—and through trust he was endowed with a new heart, right motives, and Christlike principles.<sup>10</sup> And when did God accept his trust as righteousness? Was it before he was circumcised or after? It was before!<sup>11</sup> Circumcision was the sign—a seal in his body—of the new heart and mind he had already received when he was still uncircumcised. Therefore Abraham is the father of all who trust in God (whether they are circumcised or not circumcised), those who are endowed with a new heart, right motives and Christlike principles—just like Abraham was.<sup>12</sup> Don't be confused; he is also the father of those who are not only circumcised physically, but who have also trusted God and have been endowed with new minds and Christlike principles, just like Abraham had before he was circumcised.

## FRIDAY

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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](http://book.naver.com/bookdb/book_detail.nhn?bid=9519886)

*The Remedy* – Dr. Jennings’ New Testament Paraphrase—FREE for ios and android systems.

**The Journal of the Watcher** is now available as a **HARD COVER book at Amazon** as well as a movie in itunes for everyone without ios or android, you can now get it in itunes. It is also available as an APP for Apple and Android devices.

**May 18-20:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at *The Struggle Is Real* Conference at Seacoast Church in Charleston SC, for more info and to register click this link <http://www.2016summit.net>

**October 14-16:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Drakensville, South Africa Campmeeting.

**October 19, 20:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking in Ladismith South Africa (venue to be determined)

**October 21, 22:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking in Cape Town, South Africa