

## The Book of Luke 2Q 2015 Lesson 3

### Who Is Jesus Christ?

How do you answer this question?

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| • God                                   | • Alpha and Omega<br>(Beginning and End) | • Lion of the Tribe of<br>Judah                       |
| • Son of God                            | • Bridegroom                             | • Lord of the Sabbath,<br>Hosts, Glory                |
| • Son of Man                            | • Bread of Life                          | • Master  |
| • Creator                               | • Chief Cornerstone                      | • Teacher   |
| • Savior                                | • Lamb of God                            | • Doctor/Heavenly<br>Physician                        |
| • Messiah                               | • Emmanuel/Immanuel                      | • Resurrection and Life                               |
| • Deliverer                             | • El-Shaddai                             | • Righteous Judge                                     |
| • Redeemer                              | • Elohim                                 | • Rock of Salvation                                   |
| • Bright Morning Star –<br>Light Bearer | • Joshua                                 | • Root of Jesse, Seed of<br>Abraham, Seed of<br>David |
| • High Priest                           | • I Am                                   | • Vine  |
| • The Almighty                          | • Good Shepherd                          | • The Word  |
| • Everlasting Father                    | • Jehovah                                |   |
| • Wonderful Counselor                   | • The Just One                           |   |
| • Prince of Peace                       | • King of Kings                          |   |
| • Ancient of Days                       | • Lord of Lords                          |   |

Who is Jesus Christ? He is our Creator, Savior, Friend. Jesus is a being of supreme love, kindness, grace, gentleness, goodness, yet all powerful, with life original in himself, underived from another.

What are some of the other views of Jesus and what problems do these other views present to the plan of salvation?

- Jesus is a prophet – not the Son of God
  - The war started in heaven over God trustworthiness, His character, His law, and the position of Christ in heaven
  - If Jesus was a prophet we learn nothing about God, other than God was willing to sacrifice one of His creatures, but not sacrifice Himself
  - Additionally, Jesus brings nothing to the equation, to our situation, to the problem other than what was inherited from Adam and what all humans inherit, thus, if just a prophet, He has nothing with which to remedy our terminal, sinful, condition.
  - This teaching leaves man hopeless – further it makes the problem of sin a defect in God, His wrath or anger and the plan of salvation based on some work of the worshipper, claiming the blood payment etc.
  - Finally, the idea of Jesus being only a prophet is based on misunderstanding God, His law, the nature of sin as being somehow a breaking of the rules, being in trouble with the one in charge, and thus needing to do something to God or change God. It fails to realize the



condition of humanity was changed when Adam sinned and needed fixing.

- Jesus is a created being, but Son of God
  - Again, we learn nothing about God’s character other than His willingness to sacrifice one of His creatures to save Himself.
  - If this were true Jesus would not be the source of life, so He does not have life to give to those who are terminal in sin.
  - It makes God out to be arbitrary and legalistic as Jesus becomes nothing more than a legal payment to an offended God.
- Jesus is the divine offspring of God, second to God, but of the same substance and not created like other created beings.
  - Undermines God’s character of love because teaches there was a time in eternity past in which there was a singularity, a single supreme being, with no other in existence, thus no object to love or sacrifice self for. Thus, the teaching that God is love and His character is constantly and always love is undermined.
  - Jesus becomes sacrificed to protect the Father – even though those who take this approach suggest it is a bigger sacrifice for a father to sacrifice their child than to sacrifice themselves.
    - But such a conclusion is predicated on the character of the father who is sacrificing his son. If God is love, then sacrificing his son would be harder than sacrificing himself. But, if God is the kind of being Satan alleges, i.e. selfish, then this would not be true. Many selfish parents sacrifice their children to protect themselves.
    - Thus, the sacrifice of a son, less than Himself, doesn’t reveal whether the Father is love or not. It reveals the Son loves us, but we still don’t know about the Father. Only, if the Son is fully God in all ways, can we accurately and confidently know God is love, for Jesus said, “If you’ve seen me you’ve seen the Father.” Thus, we can know it was a great sacrifice for God to surrender His Son.
  - And because in this view the Son is less than God, we don’t actually learn about God, we learn about the Son. But, when we accept Jesus is fully God, then we not only learn about the Son, we also learn about the Father and Jesus’ words, “if you seen me you’ve seen the Father” have deeper meaning.
- Jesus was not born of a fallen human woman, but of a sinless human woman
  - First, how did Mary become sinless without Jesus? And who were her parents? From where did she get her sinless humanity? And if Mary could somehow obtain sinlessness without Jesus, then why not the rest of humanity, what was the reason for Jesus at all, if one could become sinless without Him?
  - Second, if this is true then we cannot be saved – why? Because, in this view, Jesus didn’t partake of the human nature that needed to be cured, so whatever He did on earth did not procure a remedy for our situation.
  - This theory is based on accepting a false law construct, i.e. God’s law is imposed, and that sin is breaking the rules and is offensive to God, so offensive that sin cannot exist in God’s presence, so Mary had to be without sin in order to carry Jesus. And the problem is God is offended and God needs to be propitiated. This view denies that Christ came to cure the

human condition. This entire theory is based on accepting a lie about God's law.

- Jesus was not born of humanity, but merely appeared to do His mission at age 30
  - Again, this leaves us without remedy because Jesus, in this view, didn't partake of our condition and thus didn't overcome and cure it. He didn't develop throughout his life, by the exercise of His human brain, a perfect human character. So no remedy exists.
  - It is also based on the idea that God's law is imposed and what was needed was to reveal the truth about God and pay a legal penalty, but not actually cure the human condition by developing a perfect human character while being tempted in every way just like us, as the Scripture teaches.

So who is Jesus? God the Son who became human, and overcame sin as a human being, by the exercise of His human brain, developing a perfect humanity and eliminating from the humanity He partook, the infection of fear and selfishness. Thus Jesus is the Vine, the source, the conduit, through which God's perfect character of love flows back into the species human. All who trust Him receive His victory reproduced in them, such that "it is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me." We actually get new desires, motives, longings, insights, and make new choices to live in harmony with God and His design of love!

## SUNDAY

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The lesson asks us to read Luke 7:17-22, let's read through vs. 23, here is from *The Remedy*:

After this, news about Jesus spread like wildfire throughout Judea and the surrounding country. <sup>18</sup>John's students told him everything Jesus was doing. He called two of them <sup>19</sup>and sent them to Jesus to ask, "Are you the one who God promised to send, or should we look for another?" <sup>20</sup>When the students came to Jesus, they said to him, "John the Baptist sent us to ask you, 'Are you the one who God promised to send, or should we look for another?'" <sup>21</sup>As they stood watching, Jesus demonstrated God's methods; he cured many people of disease, infections, and mental oppression, and to those who were blind he gave sight. <sup>22</sup>Then he turned to John's students and said, "Go back and tell John what you have witnessed here. The blind see, the paralyzed walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Remedy is given freely to the poor." <sup>23</sup>Happy and healthy is person who doesn't reject me."

Why did John ask? What type of coming did the Jews expect? Was Jesus coming fulfilling their expectations? How did Jesus respond to John's question? He gave evidence – and what did His evidence reveal?

Level 1-4 – God has power and Jesus is from God because He has power.

Levels 5-7 – God not only has power, but God is love. He uses His power only to bless, to heal, to dispel evil, to cure. He gives of Himself for our good. God is compassionate, forgiving, gracious, trustworthy and His purpose is to restore this creation to a love relationship with Him, not establish authority in order

to rule in dominance like earthly governments.

What do people expect today about the second coming of Christ?

- Secret coming
- Vengeful coming with powerful destruction of enemies and infliction of punishment

Will Jesus come in either of these ways? Did people miss out on Jesus' first coming because they had false expectations? Is there risk of the same problem today?

What caused the people to have false expectations about His first coming?

They didn't understand God's law and character. They viewed God through the lens of human imposed laws and governments, and thought God's justice looked like our own. They therefore expected Him to come, use power and might to destroy His enemies and inflict punishment upon them.

What about today – do many good people misunderstand God and His law, and thus His character? Do many people believe God's law is no different in quality to sinful humans, imposed rules requiring external enforcement and thus it seems only just to them that God should come and inflict pain, suffering and death for disobedience?

This is Satan's goal, to set the world up to accept him as Jesus, and only those who have come back to the truth about God's character of love, and worship Him who is the Designer, the Creator and understand His law as Design law will recognize the fraud.

So what will Christ's coming be like?

- The protective hand of God, which has shielded sinful earth from the full reality of God and His universe is removed and earth is brought out of its shielded position and enters into the fullness of God's presence? And what happens? The righteous living are transformed, the righteous dead are raised to eternal life, and the wicked on earth are so overwhelmed with truth and love that their fearful and selfish minds can handle it and they shut down, go into sleep mode, awaiting resurrection at the end of the 1000 years.

## **MONDAY**

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Read second paragraph, "In Luke 1:31, 32... What throne did Lucifer want to usurp? Was it merely a piece of furniture?

Did Lucifer want to sit upon a particular chair? No, Lucifer wanted to enthrone himself in the minds of intelligent creatures as the one most loved, adored, worshipped, admired, and to whom beings were loyal.

Satan wanted to dethrone God, not from a chair or building, but from the hearts and minds of intelligent beings. And if this was his goal, what is the method to achieve this? To lie about God such that trust, love

and admiration of God is replaced with fear, selfishness and loathing of God.

Jesus would defeat Satan and this strategy – how? What method did Jesus use to defeat Satan?

Hebrews 2:14, “by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death that is the devil.”

How did Jesus destroy Satan and his power?

Here is a great historical quote that says it very nicely, understanding the war, as it says in 2Cor 10:3-5 is over the knowledge of God being fought out in the minds of intelligent beings:

**"In the atonement the character of God is revealed....In the contest between Christ and Satan, during the Saviors earthly ministry, the character of the great deceiver was unmasked. Nothing could so effectually have uprooted Satan from the affections of the heavenly angels and the whole loyal universe as did his cruel warfare upon the worlds redeemer.GC.493.**

Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer. **By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted.** Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ's brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. **The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken.** {DA 761.2}

What caused Satan's movements to be restricted? Was it some imposition of power on God's part, or the minds of heavenly beings closing to the influence of Satan?

What will it take to restrict Satan's influence on earth, the use of some imposition of power from God, or the minds of humans being so settled into the truth about God that they are closed to Satan's lies and influence?

What do you see happening in the world, is Satan's power being more and more restricted because minds are closing to his lies? Or, are more and more people accepting Satan's method of rulership, and teaching God is like Satan in character, a being who must inflict punishment? How many people believe justice is killing one's enemy? This is Satan's view of justice, not God's.

And what is happening in the world? People are being drawn more and more into a worldview in which they believe it is right and just to inflict pain, suffering and death on one's enemies.

Read fourth paragraph, “Yet, the relationship...” In His pre-incarnate state, Jesus did interact with the Father as equal. But, during His 33 years on earth, did Jesus maintain the close tie with the Father through His divinity?

Jesus was fully divine, but did He use His divinity to maintain the connection, or did He maintain His connection with the Father as a human being would, by faith and trust in the Father?

- Jesus said He did nothing on His own –
- He was tempted in all points like us, but divinity cannot be tempted, so this was His humanity being tempted.
- His humanity needed to exercise faith/trust in the Father, and exercise perfect decision making in that relationship with His Father, thus He maintained His connection with His Father with His human nature.
- He was tempted to use His divine power, but He never did, instead keeping His humanity connected by a faith/trust relationship with His Father

It is true He was always divine, and therefore was always still connected to the Father, but in some way we cannot fully understand, His human nature did not benefit from His own divine abilities or connection, but stayed connected to the Father as a human would. In fact, His divine nature caused His trials and ordeal on earth to be more severe. He was tempted to use divine powers we are never tempted to use – and the intensity of the breaking up of His relationship with the Father at Gethsemane and Calvary was infinitely more severe because of His connection with the Father than anything any human being will ever experience.

Here are a couple of historic quotes:

But He humbled Himself, and took mortality upon Him. As a member of the human family, He was mortal; but as a God, He was the fountain of life to the world. **He could, in His divine person, ever have withstood the advances of death**, and refused to come under its dominion; but **He voluntarily laid down His life**, that in so doing He might give life and bring immortality to light. **He bore the sins of the world, and endured the penalty, which rolled like a mountain upon His divine soul.** He yielded up His life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. **He died, not through being compelled to die, but by His own free will.** {FLB 46.7}

**As a remedy for the terrible consequences into which selfishness led the human race, God gave His only begotten Son to die for mankind.** How could He have given more? In this gift He gave Himself. "I and My Father are one," said Christ. By the gift of His Son, God has made it possible for man to **be redeemed and restored to oneness with Him.** "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." **Love is the great principle that actuates unfallen beings.** With amazement the angels behold the indifference that those who have light and knowledge manifest toward a world unsaved. **The heavenly host are filled with an intense desire to work through human agencies to restore in man the image of God.** They are ready and waiting to do this work. The combined power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost is pledged to uplift man from his fallen state. Every attribute, every power of divinity has been placed at the command of those who unite with the Saviour in winning men to God. O, that all would appreciate the truth as it is in Jesus. O, that all would love God in return for the love wherewith He has loved them. {Worker's Bulletin, September 9, 1902 par. 4}



## TUESDAY

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Read second paragraph, “The humanity...” Why is it essential that Christ was fully God and fully man?

Read sixth paragraph, “Fourth, note how complete...” What do you think about His foreknowledge? Did Jesus have foreknowledge or only predictions and hopes, like any other human and then went on to fulfill His predictions. Like a ball player pointing to center field to hit a homerun, and then hits the home run to center field?

Does God have real foreknowledge or only educated guesses?

This issue, every time I discuss it, gets some real intense feedback from a few people. Let me put those people in the best light – those whom I have talked to who reject God has foreknowledge, do so because they want to protect God’s reputation as a being of love. In their view, they believe that if God knows our decisions before we make them, then we are not free, and if we are not free then there is no love. So, their motive is to present God as a being of supreme love.

I respect that, and most of the people who hold to Open Theism, would agree with us on many of the major points we teach, because they truly believe in a God who is love and gives us real freedom, just as we do.

As far as I can tell, thus far in my understanding, the divergence comes on the question of whether knowing the future causes the future, i.e. takes away freedom or not. If it were true, that to know the future would be a preprogramming of choices, in which we were all simply carrying out computer programmed operations from a supreme programmer, then I would also reject the idea of God’s foreknowledge. So to view foreknowledge like this would result in a need to reject the idea of foreknowledge.

However, I believe such a construct is extremely restrictive and is evidence of a finite mind trying to force an infinite God into a construct of its own devising.

In my understanding, foreknowledge does not equal causality. To foreknow something doesn’t cause the being making the decision to make that decision. But this is philosophical, we should look at evidence of history and Scripture to weigh in on our conclusions.

Since we are talking about Jesus we will look at His life today.

- Did Jesus know what Judas would do i.e. betray Him, before Judas betrayed Him? Did Jesus foretell it? Did Jesus cause Judas to betray Him or was Judas’ choice freely made?
  - Jesus own words: “I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill this passage of Scripture: ‘He who shared my bread has turned against me.’ “I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am who I am. Jn 13:18,19

- Does it sound like Jesus is guessing?
    - Does it sound like Jesus is acting like a fortune teller?
    - When Jesus revealed the future of Judas' actions, did Jesus make the decision for Judas? Or was Judas still free to make his own decision?
    - Did Jesus in fact try and reach Judas and convert him to loyalty?
  - Here is an historic quote, "But **Judas did not come to the point of surrendering himself fully to Christ**. He did not give up his worldly ambition or his love of money. While he accepted the position of a minister of Christ, **he did not bring himself under the divine molding. He felt that he could retain his own judgment** and opinions, and he cultivated a disposition to criticize and accuse." {DA 716.4}
    - Does this sound like someone who Christ was controlling?
    - How could Jesus know what choices Judas would make unless He had foreknowledge? Or do we suggest Jesus was guessing?
- Did Jesus predict He would be crucified?
  - How did Jesus know they would crucify Him?
  - They had dragged him out to throw Him off a cliff at one point, they wanted to stone Him at another point.
  - They did stone Stephen without permission of the Romans, so how did Jesus know they would put Him on trial, turn Him over the Romans and crucify Him?
  - Could He actually know all these decisions so accurately without foreknowledge?
  - And did Jesus' foreknowledge cause them to do this?
- Did God (Jesus before incarnation) predict He would be crucified between two thieves and have his clothes gambled over?
  - How could He know this if He didn't know the choices men would make before they made them?
  - And was an angel there forcing the soldiers to put Jesus in the middle and then gamble over his clothing? Or were these choices made by those people?

There are multiple more examples that demonstrate God does know the future, but we are still free. It gives me confidence to trust a God who respects my choices, but isn't caught by surprise.

Here is another historic quote:

He that rules in the heavens is the one who sees the end from the beginning--the one before whom **the mysteries of the past and the future are alike outspread**, and who, beyond the woe and darkness and ruin that sin has wrought, beholds the accomplishment of His own purposes of love and blessing. Though "clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne." Psalm 97:2, R.V. And this the inhabitants of the universe, both loyal and disloyal, will one day understand. "His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He." Deuteronomy 32:4. {PP 43.1}



## WEDNESDAY

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The lesson asks us to read Luke 9:18-27, this is from *The Remedy*:

<sup>18</sup>When Jesus was again alone with his interns, he asked them, "Who do the people say that I am?"

<sup>19</sup>"Some say you are John the Baptist;" they told him, "others say you are Elijah who went to heaven in a chariot of fire. Still others say you are one of God's old time spokespersons who has risen from the dead."

<sup>20</sup>"What do you think? Who do you say I am?" Jesus asked them. Peter immediately blurted out, "The Messiah, the Savior of all humanity sent from God."

<sup>21</sup>Jesus gave them strict warning not to tell this to anyone else at this time.<sup>22</sup>Then he told them what would transpire. "The Son of Man must bear the hostility, abuse, mistreatment, and rejection of the church leaders, elders, chief priests, theologians who teach a legal religion, and then be killed, and on the third day raised back to life."

<sup>23</sup>Then Jesus said to them all, "If anyone wants to follow me into unity with my Father, he must surrender his life, willingly choose to die to selfishness and follow me in love.<sup>24</sup>Whoever follows the survival-of-the-fittest instinct and seeks to save his or her life will lose it because the infection of selfishness will not be eliminated, but whoever loses his life in love for me will find eternal life for he or she will have been restored back to God's design for life, selfless other-centered love.<sup>25</sup>What good does it do to selfishly hoard all the treasures of the world only to die eternally, consumed by selfishness?<sup>26</sup>If anyone is ashamed of me and my methods of truth and love, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him or her, ashamed they are not healed and able to live in his presence when he comes in his unveiled splendor and in the fullness of his Father's glory with his holy angels.<sup>27</sup>I tell you the plain truth; some of you right here will not sleep in death before you see the Son of Man glorified in his kingdom of love."

## THURSDAY

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The Transfiguration – what was its purpose? Why do you think Moses and Elijah were sent to speak with Jesus? Who did they represent?

It is the second coming, the glorification of Christ in miniature, Moses represents the saved raised from the dead, and Elijah those translated without seeing death, and Christ glorified.

What might they have spoken about? Here is a description from the book *The Desire of Ages*:

Bearing the weakness of humanity, and burdened with its sorrow and sin, Jesus walked alone in the midst of men. As the darkness of the coming trial pressed upon Him, He was in loneliness of spirit, in a world that knew Him not. Even His loved disciples, absorbed in their own doubt and sorrow and ambitious hopes, had not comprehended the mystery of His mission. He had dwelt amid the love and fellowship of heaven; but in the world that He had created, He was in solitude. **Now heaven had sent its messengers to Jesus; not angels, but men who had endured suffering**

**and sorrow, and who could sympathize with the Saviour in the trial of His earthly life.** Moses and Elijah had been colaborers with Christ. They had shared His longing for the salvation of men... Elijah had known loneliness of spirit, as for three years and a half of famine he had borne the burden of the nation's hatred and its woe. Alone he had stood for God upon Mount Carmel. Alone he had fled to the desert in anguish and despair. These men, chosen above every angel around the throne, had come to commune with Jesus concerning the scenes of His suffering, and to comfort Him with the assurance of the sympathy of heaven. The hope of the world, the salvation of every human being, was the burden of their interview. {DA 425 }

Do you think they also mentioned, how they had stumbled, but had confidence Jesus would succeed?

Bottom pink section, states, “Thus, even Jesus Himself, who had comforted so many others, sought solace and comfort for Himself. What should that tell us about how even the strongest spiritually among us, even our leaders, teachers, and guides, can at times need solace, encouragement, and help from others?”

How many fear seeking comfort, solace, encouragement? Should we?

## **FRIDAY**

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Read and discuss questions 2, 3

## 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.

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And in Australia or New Zealand email [australia@comeandreason.com](mailto: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](mailto: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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