

The Prophetic Gift Lesson 11 1Q 2009

Interpreting the Prophetic Writings

Read Memory Text – thoughts?

What is the purpose of Scripture? Do you think the memory text exaggerates when it says, “He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself”? Or do you think all the Scriptures is the Scripture designed to provide us the truth about God, ourselves, the GC and God’s plan to reconcile us to Him?

SUNDAY

“Exegesis is concerned with the original meaning of a text. It focuses on what the author wanted to say and what the text meant to the original reader.”

The lesson asks us to read Romans 2:14-16:

¹⁴(Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law,
¹⁵since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.) ¹⁶This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

Thoughts? What does this mean? Does this mean people can be saved who have never heard of Christ? Can people be saved who have never accepted Jesus as their Savior?

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved. Acts 4:12

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. John 14:6

How do we harmonize these passages? What about when we bring in the following passages?

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. Romans 1:20

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. Hebrews 1:1,2

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was with God in the beginning.³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. John 1:1-3

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.¹⁶ For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. Colossians 1:16,17

Who is the member of the Godhead through which nature was created? Jesus, and Paul says in Romans 1:20 that God's invisible qualities are seen in what He has made so men are without excuse. So, if someone learns about God through the book of nature, who are they coming to God through? Jesus the Creator of nature!

The lesson suggests we read Ezekiel 3:17-19:

¹⁷ "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. ¹⁸ When I say to a wicked man, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to dissuade him from his evil ways in order to save his life, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. ¹⁹ But if you do warn the wicked man and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his evil ways, he will die for his sin; but you will have saved yourself.

Thoughts? How do you read this text?

If you see a three year old playing with rat poison, or lighter fluid and matches, or a loaded gun, what would it mean if you did nothing but sat back and watched when you had the chance to intervene?

Our behavior, our reaction to others reveals whether love has been restored into our hearts or not. If we don't work to tell others the Good News about God then we reveal the lack of love in our own heart and our own condition will condemn us.

How would you feel if you were an engineer who designed plans for a bridge and in order to make more money you cut corners, cheated, faked reports and used substandard materials, all on purpose and later your wife and child die when the bridge collapses? How will it be for us when we come to the realization that our refusal to share the truth about God with others diminished the opportunity some had for salvation?

Read second paragraph, "On occasion..." thoughts? What determines our salvation? What prevents it? Why will all be lost who are lost?

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,² in which you used to live when you followed the

ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. Ephesians 2:1-3

We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. 1John 3:14

Thoughts about these texts? What is the condition we are born into? Is it a condition that is compatible with life or is it a condition that is terminal unless changed, cured, remedied? And what is the remedy? Jesus, and what does Jesus do in those who trust Him? Restores His character of love in us, then we have crossed over from death to life. Why do people die in the end? Because they remain in selfishness and refuse to be renewed in love!

Read bottom green section – thoughts?

Conscience is never to be used as a guide without the balancing and restraining hand of an ennobled reason. Reason and conscious combined form our judgment.

Any examples of conscious leading astray?

MONDAY

Read second paragraph – thoughts? What do you think of the idea that there is a kingdom of Grace and a kingdom of Glory?

Is it possible this distinction is a by-product of a finite mind trying to comprehend an infinite God? Is it possible the truth is like white light all the colors of the rainbow are in it but when it passes through a prism we see their individual spectrums? Is Grace and Glory mere colors of Love and God's kingdom is the kingdom of Love?

TUESDAY

Today's lesson speaks of the importance of recognizing the time and place the Scripture was written, why is this important?

What about women speaking and leading in church is this a text that is limited to a particular time and place or one which is for all people in all times?

Why do we struggle with it?

Others?

What about the Levitical laws, the food restrictions were they for a particular time and place or for all people in all time?

What do you say to Christians who argue Jesus gave us permission to eat all foods?

Agree with them that we are no longer restricted by ceremonial law from eating certain foods. Then ask, "When Christ did away with the ceremonial law did that abolish the laws of health?" Just because we are free to eat whatever we choose doesn't make all choices healthy and as stewards of the Spirit Temple is it not our duty to maintain it as fitfully as possible?

So what is the principle, never eat meat, or eat what is healthiest and let the circumstances determine?

From the White Estate:

MRS. WHITE MOST LIKELY ATE SOME OYSTERS. IN 1882, WHEN SHE WAS LIVING AT HEALDSBURG, CALIFORNIA, SHE WROTE A LETTER TO HER DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, MARY KELSEY WHITE, IN OAKLAND, IN WHICH SHE MADE THE FOLLOWING REQUEST: "Mary, if you can get me a good box of

herrings, fresh ones, please do so. These last ones that Willie got are bitter and old. If you can buy cans, say, half a dozen cans, of good tomatoes, please do so. We shall need them. If you can get a few cans of good oysters, get them." {MR852 2.3}

What about the time and place any spiritual counsel is written whether scripture or other writings?

- Sick people who take drugs do appear to get well. With some there is sufficient life force for nature to draw upon to so far expel the poison from the system that the sick, having a period of rest, recover. But no credit should be allowed the drugs taken, for they only hindered nature in her efforts. All the credit should be ascribed to nature's restorative powers.--H. to L., Chap. 3, p. 50. {Healthful Living 244.1}
- Drugging should be forever abandoned; for while it does not cure any malady, it enfeebles the system, making it more susceptible to disease.-- T., No. 32, p. 57. {HL 244.3}
- There are more who die from the use of drugs than all who would have died of disease had nature been left to do her own work.--H. to L., Chap. 3, p. 61. {HL 244.4}
- Medicines have no power to cure, but will most generally hinder nature in her efforts.--H. to L., Chap. 3, p. 62. {HL 244.5}
- . Medicine deranges nature's fine machinery, and breaks down the constitution. It kills, but never cures.--H. to L., Chap. 3, p. 57. {HL 244.6}
- The endless variety of medicines in the market, the numerous advertisements of new drugs and mixtures, all of which claim to do wonderful cures, kill hundreds where they benefit one. . . . Yet people keep dosing, and continue to grow weaker until they die. Some will have medicine at all events. Then let them take these hurtful mixtures and the various deadly poisons upon their own responsibility. -F. of F., p. 140. {HL 245.1}

- 1051 Everywhere you go you will see deformity, disease, and imbecility, which in very many cases can be traced directly back to drug poisons.--H. to L., Chap. 3, p. 51.
{HL 246.1}

Thoughts? Should we take time and situation into account?

The follow was written by medical students to EGW:

- "FROM OUR STUDY OF THE TESTIMONIES AND THE LITTLE WORK, HOW TO LIVE, WE CAN SEE THAT THE LORD IS STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE USE OF DRUGS IN OUR MEDICAL WORK. . . .SEVERAL OF THE STUDENTS ARE IN DOUBT AS TO THE MEANING OF THE WORD 'DRUG' AS MENTIONED IN HOW TO LIVE. DOES IT REFER ONLY TO THE STRONGER MEDICINES AS MERCURY, STRYCHNINE, ARSENIC, AND SUCH POISONS, THE THINGS WE MEDICAL STUDENTS CALL 'DRUGS,' OR DOES IT ALSO INCLUDE THE SIMPLER REMEDIES, AS POTASSIUM, IODINE, SQUILLS, ETC.? WE KNOW THAT OUR SUCCESS WILL BE PROPORTIONATE TO OUR ADHERENCE TO God'S METHODS. FOR THIS REASON I HAVE ASKED THE ABOVE QUESTION." {2SM 278.3}

Her answer:

- Drug poisons mean the articles which you have mentioned. The simpler remedies are less harmful in proportion to their simplicity; but in very many cases these are used when not at all necessary. 2SM 279

Thoughts? Should we today avoid the use of all medicines?
What about in her day?

Mrs. White's son, when traveling with her in Australia, wrote the following:

- "ONE TIME WHILE WE WERE IN AUSTRALIA, A BROTHER WHO HAD BEEN ACTING AS A MISSIONARY IN THE ISLANDS, TOLD MOTHER OF THE SICKNESS AND DEATH OF HIS FIRST-BORN SON. HE WAS SERIOUSLY AFFLICTED WITH MALARIA, AND HIS FATHER WAS ADVISED TO GIVE HIM QUININE, BUT IN VIEW OF THE COUNSEL IN THE TESTIMONIES TO AVOID THE USE OF QUININE HE REFUSED TO ADMINISTER IT, AND HIS SON DIED. WHEN HE MET SISTER WHITE, HE ASKED HER THIS QUESTION: 'WOULD I HAVE SINNED TO GIVE THE BOY QUININE WHEN I KNEW OF NO OTHER WAY TO CHECK MALARIA AND WHEN THE PROSPECT WAS THAT HE WOULD DIE WITHOUT IT?' IN REPLY SHE SAID, 'NO, WE ARE EXPECTED TO DO THE BEST WE CAN.'" --W. C. WHITE LETTER, SEPTEMBER 10, 1935.--COMPILED.]--
Counsels on Health, p. 261 (1890).

Thoughts? What do you think about EGW's attitude? What is the point? Principle not rules, do what is healthiest, most likely to preserve life and health!

WEDNESDAY

The lesson advises us to be aware of the immediate context of a passage – read the first two paragraphs “In the immediate...” –thoughts?

What about the suggestion at the end that there will be no children born to the redeemed in the new heaven and earth? They cite Matthew 22:30 which reads, “At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.”

Does this text say anything about children?

Read bottom green section – thoughts? What gives you assurance? If we are focused on our assurance where is our focus? Is it self-centered? What about Moses did He stop

worrying about whether he would be saved and even offered himself to save other? And Paul? And the righteous in the end! Is it possible one of the most righteous sounding ploys of the devil is to get everyone focusing on themselves, “Am I saved?”

What about saying to God, “I know you so well that I know you are completely trustworthy. I give you my life and if you know that heaven would be a better place without me then don’t let me be there”?

THURSDAY

Read dark section – thoughts about salvation by faith and how works play in?

Read first paragraph “When we look...” thoughts?

If one patient is taking medicine and the other is cheeking the medicine why is one valid and one invalid? Because only one results in actual healing and transformation! Genuine faith results in transformation of character and as we get well our symptoms decrease. What are the symptoms of sinfulness? Acts of sins, what are the signs of righteousness? Loving others!

FRIDAY

Read questions 2 and 3 and discuss