



The Role of the Church in the Community Lesson 3 3Q 2016 Justice and Mercy in the Old Testament: Part I

I received this email this week:

I recently ordered 3 of The Remedy for my family. I had been using it on line since AACC (Nashville) last year. I tell people that I finally have a New Testament in my own language. For example, the frequent use of the word "selfishness" instead of "sin" really gets my attention. As a Mennonite Christian, I also agree that various things went wrong in connection with Constantine. I will give and use the 24 copies at church for the men's bible study, my Sunday School class, and church leaders. I will also send a donation to help with the free things that you do. Thank you. Iowa

Following up from last week's lesson -- we discussed Quantum Mechanics and how we are connected in ways that defy Newtonian physics. Beyond Quantum theory is string theory, which postulates that everything in the universe is made up of tiny vibrating strings. These strings are identical, but why then does one string manifest as a heavy particle like a proton and another as a particle without mass like a photon (light)? It has to do with the vibration frequency. The more energy in the string the more mass it has. Strings are so small that if a silver dollar was magnified to be the size of our solar system, a string would be the size of a tree.

Do you find this a little too bizarre to think it could be real? Consider this quote from EGW:

The striking feature of **divine operations** is the accomplishment of the greatest work that can be done in our world by very simple means. It is God's plan that **every part of His government shall depend on every other part, the whole as a wheel within a wheel**, working with entire harmony. He moves upon human forces, causing His Spirit to touch **invisible chords, and the vibration rings to the extremity of the universe.**--Manuscript 22, 1897. {Ev 93.1}

What about healing from prayer, could it be that we are mobilizing these chords, the strings, with intention based on love that can actually result in altering DNA in the recipient of prayer and result in healing?

An interesting study was done by Dr. Rollin McCraty and colleagues. They had individuals trained to focus their intention with love and goodwill. They took human DNA from placentas and had the trained individuals focus with love and good will on vials containing the human DNA with the intention to either have the DNA wind itself tighter or to unwind looser. This can be measured by how much UV light the vials absorb. The more tightly wound the more light is absorbed. They were able to measure a 25% change in DNA conformation from these mental intention.



Now it gets more interesting—when the individuals would generate the same feelings of love and good will, but not focus attention on changing the DNA configuration, no change in the DNA occurred. And even more profound—when they focused intention but without love and goodwill, no DNA change occurred. It required both a focused intention AND the mobilization of love and goodwill emotions. How could they tell if the participants were generating love and goodwill emotions? By measuring heart rate variability, love emotions produce coherence, whereas hate, anger, negative emotions produce large fluctuations.

In a follow on study, to determine if this was perhaps a general electromagnetic field effect, or something that was more focused. Researchers had three vials with the DNA placed side by side and had the participants focus on changing the DNA conformation in two of the vials, but not the third—and—only the two the participants focused on showed the DNA change. Finally, researches had five different experiments in which the DNA vials were a half mile from the participants, and the same DNA changes occurred when the participants focused with intent and love. All of these studies reached statistical significant levels of change. (McCarty, 2003 *Modulation of DNA conformation by heart-focused intention* p. 6, Boulder Creek, CA: Institute of HeartMath)

Elizabeth Targ, MD, PhD conducted a study to measure the impact of remote (long distance, never having met the patient) prayer on terminally ill AIDS patients. She had the faith healers presented with a patient's photo, name and T-helper cell count. They took great pains to ensure that the no patient in the study new who were being prayed for and who was not being prayed for by these specific spiritual healers.

Six months later those who received remote healing prayer showed improved mood, significantly less doctor visits, fewer hospitalizations, fewer days in the hospital, higher T-helper cell counts, fewer AIDS defining illnesses, and significantly lower HIV viral levels. (*Western Journal of Medicine* 1998, 168(6), 356.)

This would mean that DNA changes were occurring in a myriad of various genes producing a host of proteins throughout the body—from the focused intention of prayers of goodwill.

In another study researchers placed cancer patients in Faraday cages, electro-magnetically shielded rooms, and even used fiber optic monitors so no metal wires were inside the room. Then they had either spouse or close friends focus healing intention to the cancer patient in the Faraday cage in 10 second bursts, randomly chosen by computer. During those 10 second bursts of healing intention they could measure changes in skin conductivity in the cancer patients, which corresponded with activation of the autonomic nervous system. (*Explore: Journal of Science and Healing* 2008, 4(4), 235.)

The point is that we are all connected, we are beings composed of more than just matter, we are living beings with real energy, but also with free will. We can choose, and our choices do impact the world



around us. Our thoughts, our beliefs, our heart felt intentions actual cause quantum changes in the world around us.

Now, what do you think of that EGW quote?

What about in James, “the prayer of a righteous person avails much”—what does it mean to be a righteous man? It is a person who is right in heart with God, which means a person who loves—not persons who do right rituals, but have no love. It is the love in the heart with intention that connects the universe. We can only be connected with God when we come back to the truth about His character of love and open our heart to His love!

SABBATH

What does the title of the lesson bring to your mind?

Is there a difference between justice and mercy? What is the difference?

What law lens do you view justice and mercy through?

What is justice through the human imposed law lens—law that has no inherent consequence for breaking, but requires external punishment? What is justice in this view? It is punishing law breakers.

And in the human imposed law lens, what is mercy? Finding some way not to punish them—one dictionary definition of mercy is:

“the discretionary power of a judge to pardon someone or to mitigate punishment, especially to send to prison rather than invoke the death penalty.”

So, level four and below thinking, justice is the infliction of just punishments whereas mercy is the pardoning of the just punishment. This level of thinking, with this view of law leads to the theory of penal substitution, the idea that God is just in punishing sin, but merciful to sinners because God punished Jesus instead of us so that both justice and mercy can be achieved. This is all based on a failure to understand God’s law and how God’s universe actually works.

More pointedly, this penal substitution view is based on Satan’s view of God’s law, that God’s law is no different functionally than the laws created beings make, rules requiring coercive enforcement. Thus, penal views of God supports Satan’s attack on God that God is no better than created beings. Something Satan has alleged all along.

But, God is the Creator, the Builder of space, time, matter, energy, life. His laws are the protocols upon which all reality is constructed to operate upon. Thus deviations from God’s laws are terminal to the deviant.



With this level of thinking in mind, what is justice?

- The sustaining of all the laws upon which life is built, which includes the law of love and liberty, which results in God granting people genuine freedom.

But, what then is the just course to take for those deviant from God's law?

- To grant them the freedom to reap what they have sewn.

But, that would be death, so where does mercy come in?

- Mercy is God intervening to provide a free Remedy, which will restore all who choose to partake, back to God's original design, back to harmony with His law, while leaving all who reject the Remedy free to reap what they have chosen, which is death.

With this in mind, are justice and mercy different? Or are they, in reality, expressions of the same process—love—and love always does what is right and love always does what is merciful!

How?

If you saw your child dying from liver failure from years of alcohol abuse, yet you had the ability to provide a remedy that would save their life and restore them to perfect health, including victory over their alcoholism, would you do it? Would it be just, or right, if you had the ability to provide such a remedy to your child, for you to do so? Would it also be merciful?

But what if your child, even though you have provided this remedy, refuses to take it? What then?

What then is the just or right action to take? Would you need to inflict torture, beat them, or execute them? Or, in a universe of love, would justice require one to harmonize with the law of liberty, and thus leave them free to die of their disease?

And, if you did allow them to die, when you had a cure, but they refused the cure, would allowing them to die also be the merciful thing to do? Or would it be more merciful to use artificial means to keep them alive in a state of pain and suffering?

When we come back to design law we can see how God is love and how God is always just and always merciful to both the righteous and the wicked.

Here is a description of what happens to the wicked at the end of time from a book called *The Great Controversy*. Notice what is being described, go past declaratives to what is actually happening and see if you see justice and mercy, and if so what is justice and mercy?

God has given to men a **declaration of His character and of His method of dealing with sin.**
[what do you think that declaration is?] "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering



and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." [What do you hear? What is His method? Why will God not clear the guilty? What law lens do you see it through, imposed or design?] Exodus 34:6, 7. "All the wicked will He destroy." "The transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off." Psalm 145:20; 37:38. The **power and authority of the divine government will be employed to put down rebellion; yet all the manifestations of retributive justice will be perfectly consistent with the character of God as a merciful, long-suffering, benevolent being.** {GC 541.2}

What does this mean? Do you hear retributive justice and think using power to inflict harm, pain, punishment? This would be level four and below thinking. The power and authority of the divine government will be employed—used—to put down rebellion. What is God's means, methods, power? Yes God's power, but the power of love, truth and freedom. Notice what is described in the following paragraphs...

God does not force the will or judgment of any. He takes no pleasure in a slavish obedience. He desires that the creatures of His hands shall love Him because He is worthy of love. [If this is true, can God then be the source of inflicted suffering, punishment and death? Is it possible to get free decisions, uncoerced choices, and love by threatening to kill those who don't choose what you want them to choose? Level 4 and below cannot harmonize these two paragraphs, level 6 and 7 can] **He would have them obey Him because they have an intelligent appreciation of His wisdom, justice, and benevolence.** [What reason would God have us obey? Not fear of punishment, but appreciation of His character of love, which cannot exist if God is the source of inflicted punishment. It is Satan's view that God must punish sin because it undermines love.] And all who have a just conception of these qualities will love Him because they are drawn toward Him in admiration of His attributes. {GC 541.3}

The principles of kindness, mercy, and love, taught and exemplified by our Saviour, are a transcript of the will and character of God. [What are the principles of God's character? Do these principles coerce, compel, or torture?] Christ declared that He taught nothing except that which He had received from His Father. **The principles of the divine government are in perfect harmony with the Saviour's precept, "Love your enemies."** [Does love seek to inflict pain and suffering to punish? But notice what is describe next as love for our enemies] **God executes justice upon the wicked,** for the good of the universe, and **even for the good of those upon whom His judgments are visited.** [What is justice? Doing what is right, under what law? Design law, which is the law of love, which means God wants to minimize pain, minimize suffer, heal all who will let him, but ultimately to stop the torment of those who wont allow Him to heal them. Thus, God's justice is like the parent whose child is in liver failure and refuses to be healed, the parent does seek to prolong and protract the suffering, but to allow the suffering to end. Notice what is described next.] **He would make them happy if He could do so in accordance with the laws of His government and the justice of His character.** [Why can't God make them happy? Because they refuse to participate in His methods, they



refuse to allow Him to heal them.] He surrounds them with the tokens of His love, He grants them a knowledge of His law, and follows them with the offers of His mercy; but they despise His love, make void His law, and reject His mercy. [How do they make void His law? By replacing it with a false law—imposed law. Think how sad it will be for those legal Sabbath keepers who wouldn't enter Pilates house while they sought to kill Jesus. Law keepers, but the wrong law, how many today are in the same situation?] While constantly receiving His gifts, they dishonor the Giver; they hate God because they know that He abhors their sins. The Lord bears long with their perversity; **but the decisive hour will come at last, when their destiny is to be decided.** [what determines their destiny? Is it a judicial finding in a heavenly court, or the choice of the sinner to permanently harden their heart to the work of the Holy Spirit?] **Will He then chain these rebels to His side? Will He force them to do His will?** [These are rhetorical questions, meaning that God will not do this, which means He cannot be the source of inflicted punishment and death] {GC 541.4}

Those who have chosen Satan as their leader and have been controlled by his power are not prepared to enter the presence of God. [Why? What does this mean?] **Pride, deception, licentiousness, cruelty, have become fixed in their characters.** [How did it become fixed? Who fixed it there? If God “judges” their characters fixed, does He make it fixed or is God's judgment the accurate diagnosis of what they have chosen to do to themselves?] Can they enter heaven to dwell forever with those whom they despised and hated on earth? Truth will never be agreeable to a liar; meekness will not satisfy self-esteem and pride; purity is not acceptable to the corrupt; disinterested love does not appear attractive to the selfish. What source of enjoyment could heaven offer to those who are wholly absorbed in earthly and selfish interests? {GC 542.1}

Could those whose lives have been spent in rebellion against God be suddenly transported to heaven and witness the high, the holy state of perfection that ever exists there,— every soul filled with love, every countenance beaming with joy, enrapturing music in melodious strains rising in honor of God and the Lamb, and ceaseless streams of light flowing upon the redeemed from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne,—could those whose hearts are filled with hatred of God, of truth and holiness, mingle with the heavenly throng and join their songs of praise? **Could they endure the glory of God and the Lamb? No, no; [Why not? Because God uses divine power to prevent them, to torture them, to inflict harm upon them, or is their condition is incompatible with God's design for life?] years of probation were granted them, that they might form characters for heaven;** but *they* have never trained the mind to love purity; *they* have never learned the language of heaven, and now it is too late. **A life of rebellion against God has unfitted them for heaven.** [Why are they unfit? Is it that they don't have the right legal payment in record books, or is it something actually within them? Notice why they are not fit] **Its purity, holiness, and peace would be torture to them; the glory of God would be a consuming fire.** [This is huge, what do they experience as torture? Purity, holiness and peace! Is this God using His power to cause pain, to inflict suffering, is there something coming out from God other than goodness, mercy, love and truth? It is their



condition which experiences goodness as pain, purity as torment, holiness and suffering. The torture happens because of sin in them, not as an infliction from God!] **They would long to flee from that holy place. They would welcome destruction**, that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. [What do the wicked actually want? Separation from God! Why do they want it? To be at peace, to stop their suffering; So, in this situation what is the just action for God to take, what is the merciful action for God to take? Is there a difference between justice and mercy? Notice the next sentences] **The destiny of the wicked is fixed by their own choice. Their exclusion from heaven is voluntary with themselves, and just and merciful on the part of God.** {GC 542.2}

Like the waters of the Flood the fires of the great day declare God's verdict that the wicked are incurable. [This is design law, this is justice and mercy, and justice and mercy rightly understood is always an expression of God's character of love and does the same thing] {GC 543.1}

Read memory text, "He upholds..." Do you see justice here is healing, restoring, delivering those oppressed not punishing the oppressors?

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, "Even in early Israel..." How do we understand justice? God's justice only works when we love others more than self. When we are selfish, then we immediately think about our rights, what is important to us and ours.

Keith Johnson is an online friend, who has worked for years in prison ministry teaching inmates about God's design law, helping them to move past imposed law constructs of right, wrong and justice. He developed four questions to help them understand more clearly what justice is from God's viewpoint.

1. What if I told you that your youngest child was murdered? Would you want mercy or justice *for* the perpetrator?
2. What if I told you that the murderer was your oldest child? Would you want mercy or justice *for* the perpetrator?
3. What if I told you that you are guilty of the murder of the only begotten Son of God? Would you want mercy or justice *as* the perpetrator?
4. What if I told you that you had a daughter, your only daughter, the apple of your eye, who has never given you a moment's grief, but tonight, as her father, you happen to have your tux hanging in the closet, because tomorrow you are scheduled to walk your daughter down the aisle and give her away to someone whom you approve? If you're the mother, you have your new dress hanging next to her wedding gown that you have been planning and preparing for



since the first time she held her in her arms. But tonight, your daughter is at a bachelorette party with her peers and they talk her into having “one-for-the-road,” the first ever in her life. Two, three, four, five, six, seven (drinks) later, while on her way home, she wipes out a school bus full of little children on their way to camp. Everybody aboard the bus dies in a fiery inferno, but you daughter survives. Do you want mercy or justice for your daughter (?) and...what do those who are related to the victims who were on the bus want?

Human justice is based on human law—imposed rules, and is motivated by selfishness and seeks vengeance under the name justice. The selfish heart has an ingrained sense of justice, but which in reality is nothing more than vengeance, and which is easily exposed because such ‘justice’ is sought only so long as it doesn’t apply to them or theirs.

Justice in God’s universe is entirely different. God’s justice always seeks to deliver, heal, restore, set right, fix, and save everyone who will allow God to do so. It is the justice of love—the law of God upon which God’s government runs.

MONDAY

The lesson points us to consider the Sabbath and justice—how does the Sabbath connect with justice?

The lesson points out three types of Sabbath:

- Weekly Sabbath
- Sabbath years when the land was not plowed or sewn with seed
- Year of Jubilee when property returned to families and slaves set free

What do we learn about justice from these Sabbaths? What principles are being taught?

The weekly Sabbath—what is being taught here? Is this imposed law or design law?

Is the primary element of the Sabbath avoiding physical labor, or in *remembering*, focusing the mind, thinking, attending to God, strengthening our relationship with Him. Are the injunctions about not working, not primarily about the expenditure of energy, but about distractions for the mind, about minimizing those things which would occupy our minds and interfere with our remembering God and connecting with Him?

If the primary purpose of the Sabbath is to help us remember something, what is it to help us remember? The lesson suggests God as Creator and Redeemer, okay, upon what type of law is creation built? Thus to remember our Creator, means to remember design law, to worship the Builder, to reject dictator views of God, and what about redemption? How is our redemption achieved? Is it not by Christ actually fixing what Adam did, by Christ not only revealing truth to destroy lies and win to trust, but developing a perfect human character that He offers freely to all who will accept? This is also design law!



Thus the weekly Sabbath is design law, a signpost to remind us God is not arbitrary, and His laws are not rules that He must enforce with punishments.

What about the yearly Sabbath—design law or imposed law? Design law, the nitrogen cycle, allowing the land to lay fallow to restore nitrogen to the soil so that the land will continue to produce a bountiful crop.

What about the year of Jubilee, design law of imposed law?

Some might say imposed as the issues of slavery, land ownership are all imposed contracts and laws. And, it certainly entailed application of a code for imposed type rules, but what is the basis of all of it? The law of love! Which is about restoring people, not arbitrary rules, thus it is also the working out of God's design for life. The Jubilee was an object lesson of how God is working to set us free from the slavery of sin and restore us to our Eden home!

TUESDAY

Read memory verse at top of lesson, "Speak up for..." Do we see again justice is delivering the oppressed, not punishing the oppressor?

Read last paragraph, "Though, of course..." What does it look like to worship God while neglecting those in need?

- Any form of coercive religion—Dark Ages, inquisition, crusades, or Taliban and ISIS today?
- What about cruelty to any group?

If we want to help people in need do we first need to understand their need?

How do we balance helping people in need with Paul's admonishment to the Thessalonians:

For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." 2Thes 3:10

If we see someone hungry, does that mean we should automatically give them food? Or do the circumstances matter?

Would a job be more valuable to them than a mere handout of a meal? Why? What would a job, for those who are capable of work, provide that a meal would not?

Could handouts to those who are capable actually harm? How?

How do we find the balance?



What do you do if you realize someone needs a job, but they refuse to work and they prefer the life of living off other people's charity—when they are capable of working?

WEDNESDAY

The lesson asks us to read Isaiah 58:3-14:

³ 'Why have we fasted,' they say,
'and you have not seen it?'

Why have we humbled ourselves,
and you have not noticed?'

"Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please
and exploit all your workers.

⁴ Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife,
and in striking each other with wicked fists.

You cannot fast as you do today
and expect your voice to be heard on high.

⁵ Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,
only a day for a man to humble himself?

Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed
and for lying on sackcloth and ashes?

Is that what you call a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?

⁶ **"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:**

**to loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,**

**to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?**

⁷ **Is it not to share your food with the hungry**

and to provide the poor wanderer with

shelter—

**when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not
to turn away from your own flesh and
blood?**

⁸ **Then your light will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will quickly appear;**

then your righteousness will go before you,
and the glory of the LORD will be your rear
guard...

¹³ "If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath
and from doing as you please on my holy day,

if you call the Sabbath a delight
and the LORD's holy day honorable,

and if you honor it by not going your own way
and not doing as you please or speaking idle
words,

¹⁴ then you will find your joy in the LORD,
and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the
land

and to feast on the inheritance of your father
Jacob."

The mouth of the LORD has spoken.

What do you hear? Is this level two—make a deal with God, if we do this then God does that? Or is this level 6/7 design law, how things actually work, the more you give the more you receive. As you exercise you get stronger?

Can you actually experience the blessings God has by doing the work, but not enjoying it? Why or why not?

What is it God wants for us? Transformation of heart/character, and this only happens when our hearts have the right motivation for the action, it is not in the actions itself.



THURSDAY

The lesson is about the church being a force of good in the community. About helping those who don't have a voice to help themselves. How can the church do this?

FRIDAY

Discuss questions 1 and 2



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**—FREE for ios and android systems.

The Remedy—Is Now Available in Print Version in the US. We have printed 10,000 to give away and will reassess demand for them after those are gone. We are shipping a small number to Canada and Australia. **How to get copies:** In the US email orders@comeandreason.com with a valid US postal address; In Canada email canada@comeandreason.com and in Australia/New Zealand email Australia@comeandreason.com and request the number you want and we will ship them to you. If you are giving them away please give them only to people who want them. In other words, don’t put one at every seat in the church, or place setting at a potluck, or car in a parking lot. Such distribution methods result in vast numbers being thrown away. Let people know they are free and allow them to take one if they want too works best.

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 in itunes. It is also available as an APP for Apple and Android devices.

Thursday, June 9 at 1:30 PM Eastern Time Dr. Jennings will appear on the *Lifestyle Magazine* show, “Healing The Mind” that he recorded previously. It is scheduled to air on the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN). Keep in mind that TBN can preempt the show at their discretion.

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