



2021 3Q Rest In Christ: Lesson 12 The Restless Prophet

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

Many of you will be relieved to know that in this lesson we will not be talking about liberty of conscience related to COVID vaccines or spending time on that issue. But because of emails demonstrating that what I have been trying to achieve on this issue has been misunderstood by some, I need to clarify what has been the focus of our ministry over the last few weeks.

Some have thought that I have not been focusing on the Bible or the gospel. This following is a portion of a response to one of the listeners:

And what is the message for this time? Is it not the message of God's character that results in the sealing of the saints into the character of God? And how does that happen--by first knowing God and second choosing to apply God's law, methods, principles to our lives in how we treat others. If we claim cognitive knowledge of God's character but still practice the methods of Satan then we develop the character of Satan. So, how do you think the final message of God's character that transforms people goes forward? It is by living out of God's principles of truth, love and liberty in how we treat others. The COVID issue, with lies, coercion, accusation, silencing, fear peddling etc. is one of Satan's end time attacks on God's people to get them to choose to "save lives" by the application of Satan's methods thereby allowing them to think they are doing a godly work while they ruin their character and misrepresent God with the application of Satanic methods. Reading EGW more widely, especially about the final events right before Christ comes, and we discover she describes events will unfold that will put people into positions that will require them to act out/live out the true principles they cherish thereby solidifying their characters into either Christlikeness or satanic. I believe the COVID mandates are part of this end-time issue by getting people to choose to coerce and compel other people's consciences rather than presenting truth in love and leaving them free.



The COVID issue is a worldwide issue. And the church, with all its institutions, has the opportunity to present the true gospel by standing up for the principles of God--truth, love, liberty--respecting conscience, opposing coercion of conscience on this issue. Could you imagine if the SDA worldwide church, schools, hospitals, clinics, missions all of them actively opposed coercion on this issue (not oppose promoting the vaccine with evidence and liberty but oppose the methods of imperialism) that attention of millions perhaps billions would be drawn to the church. People would inquire, "who are these people" the opportunity would be given to present God as Creator, His design laws (health message) and the principles of love which always leaves free. And Jesus in describing the end when separating the sheep from the goats said the differentiating factor was how they treated Jesus in the person of others, "as you have done it unto the least of these you have done it unto me." Thus, it isn't just the theological construct one holds of God it is also living out the love of God in how we treat others, meaning truth presented in love, leaving others free. So, this issue is setting the world up, as they practice coercing others for a "good cause" to "save lives" then those methods become accepted into their hearts, their characters change and they will accept them again on the next issue.

So we will step back from the application of God's methods in regard to this issue and focus on the material in the lesson today.

SUNDAY

Jonah ran away from God's call—why?

Read the fourth and fifth paragraphs, "Historical and archeological records..." The Assyrians were enemies of the people of Judah and Israel. Israel had already fallen, the people were dispersed, and terrible atrocities were perpetrated upon the descendants of Israel.

What would have been a normal attitude of the Israelites toward the Assyrians after such atrocities?

Have you been watching the news the past two weeks about Afghanistan? Bombings, shootings, reports that ISIS K and the Taliban have put aside their differences until all



infidels, meaning Christians, have been hunted down and killed. As you see these reports, what is your attitude?

Do we understand Jonah may have had a negative attitude toward the Ninevites?

What do we learn from Jonah's experience that is important for us today at this time in Earth's history?

What did God want from Jonah? Did God want Jonah to hate the Ninevites or love them? But these people were cruel to Jonah's people—surely the God of justice would want to punish them for their crimes, right? Surely, Jonah was right to run away until God saw the righteousness of getting the Assyrians to pay reparation, right?

Or was there something wrong with Jonah that Jonah didn't want to take this message of repentance to Nineveh? Could it be that Jonah didn't fully understand reality? That Jonah didn't fully comprehend the sin problem, that Jonah was seeing things through a human, worldly lens and not through God's perspective?

What does sin do to sinners? What happens to people who are cruel to other people?

So, if someone is cruel to you and yours what happens inside of them? From God's perspective, if you are in a saving relationship with Jesus and someone treats you badly, what does God want in that situation?

Does God want us to be useful in some way for Him, to somehow present a saving message to the very ones who mistreated us?

Is that what we want to do if someone mistreats us?

- If you are gay and you have been denied services, or mocked, or belittled, or beaten up, what is your natural desire toward those who have mistreated you and what would God have your attitude and actions be toward those who have mistreated you?
- If you are black and you have been falsely arrested, accused, denied work, mistreated, discriminated against, what is your natural desire toward those who have mistreated you and what would God have your attitude and actions be toward those who mistreat you?



- If you are white in society and have experienced reverse discrimination, denial of promotion through what you consider woke policies what is your natural desire toward those who have mistreated you and what would God have your attitude and actions be toward those you determine have wronged you?
- If you are a vaccinated in society what is your attitude toward those who are unvaccinated and what would God have your attitude and actions be toward the unvaccinated?
- If you are an unvaccinated who has been pressured, fired, denied travel, or wronged in some other way, what is your attitude toward those who have mistreated you and what would God have your attitude and actions be toward those who wronged you?

Do we find a lesson for our lives today in the story of Jonah?

Did Jonah, as a Jew, have reasons to harbor negative feelings toward the Assyrians? Could Jonah have developed biases and prejudices—were these totally the fault of Jonah, or could they have been the result of wrongs done to Jonah’s people and perhaps Jonah himself?

Do we see one of Satan’s strategies here? How does Satan advance His kingdom? Isn’t by inspiring people to do real wrongs to other people which offends and incites bitterness, hatred, and if possible retaliation?

What is the solution? If you experience real wrongs, is the best solution to seek retribution—inflicted punishment to make the perpetrator pay the proper price? If external punishment is used, will it result in the highest level of peace, love, joy and friendship?

What is needed to bring lasting peace? What are God’s methods to deal with wrongs?

Have you heard “an eye for an eye and the whole world will go blind”?

Can we advance God’s cause by seeking retribution on those who have done us wrong?

What about “justice” through state power, can we advance God’s kingdom by using the power of the state to punish wrongdoers? If we get congress to fund a war and invade



another country and do it legally, a “just” war. Will this result in advancing God’s cause?

What about laws to compel and force people we disagree with to do things our way—we are not talking about restraining people from overtly harming another, but requiring them to behave the way we want for instance:

- Jim Crow laws restricted blacks and allowed discrimination based in law and enforced by government, these laws coerced and compelled blacks to behave in certain ways in society—these laws were wrong and righteousness required they be removed.
- What about laws that prevent same sex couples from having the same civil liberties and legal privileges in society as married heterosexual couples? Is creating laws that give individuals the freedom to have civil unions or marriages under the law the same as requiring people to marry?
- What about laws that require people to participate in the wedding of someone else—bake cakes or do flower arrangements or photography? Is there a difference between restraining people from obstructing someone’s wedding and forcing people to participate in the wedding?
- What about laws that obstruct the government and others from interfering with your religious practice, in other words, freedom of religion, is that the same as laws that require people to attend church, or to rest on a certain day of the week?

In the Bible human governments only use power righteously to restrain those who would harm others. Whenever governments cross the line to advance their morals by forcing the consciences of others, they abuse their power and advance Satan’s kingdom, because they will violate liberty, do injustice, incite rebellion and divide society into hostile and warring factions—very much like we see happening in the world today.

So, we are talking about Jonah—he lived in a time when he experienced real atrocities done to his people and terrible violence and abuse and then he received a message from God to go to these very same people and call them to repentance—to warn them that if they don’t change they will be destroyed.

Consider the implications, if the people genuinely repent what would that mean for Jonah? Wouldn’t it mean some of these people will be in heaven—Jonah could have them as neighbors for all eternity.



Consider our situation—someone as done real wrong to your or your people—enslaved them, gone to war against them, imprisoned them, lied, discriminated, stolen from you or your people.

What would be your response if God came to you and said, “I want you to go to those people with a message of my love, call them back to me, call them to repentance so you can live eternally with them”?

What did Jesus say?

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt 5:43–48 NIV84).

Why did Jesus say this?

What is perfection in this passage? It is about task performance, or is it about love? And what law did Jesus highlight in this passage as an example of God’s law? The laws of nature, design laws, these laws do not discriminate but treat all the same—these are not imposed rules, and cannot be achieved by legislation.

What determines who ends up in heaven? Will our relationship with Jesus have anything to do with it?

Will people who end up in heaven be friends with Jesus and become like Jesus in heart attitude, in love for God and others, and in character in how they live and treat others?

Will every person, in their own lives, have to decide for or against Jesus? But how will this happen in places like Afghanistan now that all the Christians are being killed, or in places like China which has cracked down on Christians?

It is by each person being faced with circumstances in which they must decide what law they apply to their own heart in how they treat others. There are two antagonistic



principles at war for every heart and mind—God’s design law of love, truth, liberty and Satan’s law of sin and death, more commonly known as the survival drives of fear, selfishness manifested in the world in imposed law and coercive enforcement.

Everyone will make a clear choice as to which methods they practice in the treatment of others. And it is the world’s unfolding events that bring people to the critical decision point. As the world continues to globalize, as governments increase their coercive pressure, as liberties are removed, as lies increase, as fear and selfishness magnify, and as crisis after crisis occurs, governments will add to their laws and increase their demands, pressure, and control.

As this happens, every person will be faced with the choice of whether they live out God’s law or the law of sin and death.

As we enter into the last moments before Christ returns, God permits events to unfold in such a way that each and every person will face a choice for Jesus—but not in an evangelistic way, not primarily in the form of an altar call or a profession of faith. No, the choice each person makes for or against Jesus is when each person chooses the principles and methods they prefer and practice regarding how reality actually works, especially in how they treat others.

Will we:

- Love others more than self and, therefore, present the truth to others, in love, while leaving them free to decide for themselves; sacrifice ourselves, our resources, and our safety to help, protect, and shelter others?

Or will we:

- Love self first by withholding truth for fear of rejection, retaliation, arrest, firing from our job, censuring; spread falsehood, coerce others, support governments that violate individual liberties, use force; report others who don’t comply to the government; refuse to shelter others, protect others, and help others?

It is in how we treat others that we choose whose law we embrace—God’s or Satan’s; this is how every person chooses either to accept or reject Jesus in the last days, even those in far remote places who have never heard the name Jesus, for our Savior said:

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and



he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

And notice Jesus doesn't separate the people based on race, or nationality, or culture, or creed, or denomination, Jesus separates people based on what law they live out in the way they treat others, and thereby how they treat Him:

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, '**Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.**'

Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer them, saying, '**Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.**' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life (Matthew 25:31-46 NKJV).

Yes, every single person will choose—either to love others or not. As events unfold, we will be faced with more threats, more anxieties, more fear, and we will be tempted to retaliate, to use force, to kill or be killed as a means of protecting self. But the saved of God are described in Revelation with these words, "They did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death" (Revelation 12:11 NIV84).



For the translated, those who are ready to meet Jesus, love has cast out fear. They don't have a death wish, they are not suicidal, they love life, but they don't fear death—they would rather die than break their love for God and others.

This is not a power we can conjure. It is not a force of will. This power is the power of love transforming the soul, it is the power of God to cast out all fear, it is the power of Jesus living in the heart. It is the result of the cleansing of the Spirit temple by the indwelling of Christ. This is a supernatural work that occurs only by a living trust relationship with Jesus. It is the result of coming back into a true knowledge of God, by worshipping the Creator, by beholding Him and being transformed by His presence.

Consider this quote from the book *Ministry of Healing*:

Like our Saviour, we are in this world to do service for God. We are here **to become like God in character**, and by a life of service to reveal Him to the world. In order to be co-workers with God, **in order to become like Him and to reveal His character, we must know Him aright**. We must know Him as He reveals Himself. MH 409.1

A knowledge of God is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation. **It is this alone that can make us like God in character**. MH 409.2

This is the knowledge needed by all who are working for the uplifting of their fellow men. **Transformation of character, purity of life, efficiency in service, adherence to correct principles, all depend upon a right knowledge of God**. This knowledge is the essential preparation both for this life and for the life to come. MH 409.3

And the author goes on to quote Scripture where Jesus is the revelation of God to us. If we have seen Jesus, we have seen the Father. In Jesus is the fullness of the Godhead.

Thus we fix our eyes on Christ. If we want to be victorious over fear, to love like Jesus loves, to love our enemies, we must unplug from the world and connect with Jesus; we must reject human justice and embrace God's justice; we must stop advancing human governments and advance the government of God.



What does this look like?

Christian de Chergé was a French Catholic monk and the Trappist prior of the Tibhirine monastery in Algeria. With the rise of radical Islam in 1993, Father Chergé knew that his life was in danger. But instead of leaving Algeria, Father Chergé chose to stay and continue his witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. On May 24, 1996 Father Chergé was beheaded by Muslim radicals. Anticipating his death, Father Chergé had left a testament with his family to be read upon the event of his murder. The testament in part reads:

“If it should happen one day — and it could be today — that I become a victim of the terrorism which now seems ready to encompass all the foreigners living in Algeria, I would like my community, my Church, my family, to remember that my life was given to God and to this country. I ask them to accept that the One Master of all life was not a stranger to this brutal departure. I ask them to pray for me: for how could I be found worthy of such an offering? I ask them to be able to associate such a death with the many other deaths that were just as violent, but forgotten through indifference and anonymity.

My life has no more value than any other. Nor any less value. In any case, it has not the innocence of childhood. I have lived long enough to know that I share in the evil which seems, alas, to prevail in the world, even in that which would strike me blindly. I should like, when the time comes, to have a clear space which would allow me to beg forgiveness of God and of all my fellow human beings, and at the same time to forgive with all my heart the one who would strike me down.

Obviously, my death will justify the opinion of all those who dismissed me as naïve or idealistic: ‘Let him tell us what he thinks now.’ But such people should know that my death will satisfy my most burning curiosity. At last, I will be able — if God pleases — to see the children of Islam as He sees them, illuminated in the glory of Christ, sharing in the gift of God’s Passion and of the Spirit, whose secret joy will always be to bring forth our common humanity amidst our differences.

I give thanks to God for this life, completely mine yet completely theirs, too, to God, who wanted it for joy against, and in spite of, all odds. In this Thank You — which says everything about my life — I include you, my friends past and present,



and those friends who will be here at the side of my mother and father, of my sisters and brothers — thank you a thousandfold.

And to you, too, my friend of the last moment, who will not know what you are doing. Yes, for you, too I wish this thank-you, this 'Adieu,' whose image is in you also, that we may meet in heaven, like happy thieves, if it pleases God, our common Father. Amen!"

—Father Christian de Chergé

<http://brianzahnd.com/2015/02/last-testament-beheaded-christian/#more-4442>

I want to love my enemies like this, but I know it is not natural to my heart. I know that I need the grace of Jesus, I need a supernatural work. I am far too easily pulled into feelings of resentment or anger and this is a trap of Satan.

I want us all to see Jesus more clearly, to focus upon Him, to know His love and to be transformed, so that when the trials come, the threats, the enemies attack the love of God will overflow us and extinguish the fear and we will be like Jesus and love even our enemies.

It is my view, that as the end-time events unfold, there will be two classes of people—those who have God's law of love written on their hearts so that in action, in deed, in function, they love God and others, versus those who have fear and selfishness established as the law of their life and they live out those methods in how they treat others.

We will be faced with a choice, do we love our enemies, pray for those who spitefully use us, or do we harbor hate, resentment, bitterness and seek to use power, including the legal power of the state, to punish and force others to comply to what we think is right.

Every person will decide. God help us because I know I cannot love my enemies in my strength. I want to, I want that kind of love, but I know how infected I am with fear, with selfishness and I know it will only be possible through a supernatural work in me.

It is through our daily practices, preparing ourselves through worship and time with Jesus that we develop the trust, the faith, the relationship with God so that when faced with such circumstances we are capable of receiving the power to love our enemies.



We will all ultimately live out the law that we have embraced and cherished. Consider this quote from *Conflict and Courage*:

Each actor in history stands in his lot and place; for God's great work after His own plan will be carried out by **men who have prepared themselves to fill positions for good or evil**. In opposition to righteousness, men become instruments of unrighteousness. But **they are not forced to take this course of action**. They need not become instruments of unrighteousness, any more than Cain needed to. . . . {CC 371.2}

Men of all characters, righteous and unrighteous, will stand in their several positions in God's plan. With the characters they have formed, they will act their part in the fulfillment of history. In a crisis, just at the right moment, they will stand in the places they have prepared themselves to fill. Believers and unbelievers will fall into line as witnesses to confirm truth that they themselves do not comprehend. **All will cooperate in accomplishing the purposes of God, just as did Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod. In putting Christ to death, the priests thought they were carrying out their own purposes, but unconsciously and unintentionally they were fulfilling the purpose of God.** {CC 371.3}

God looks into the tiny seed that He Himself has formed, and sees wrapped within it the beautiful flower, the shrub, or the lofty, wide-spreading tree. So does He see the possibilities in every human being. **We are here for a purpose. God has given us His plan for our life, and He desires us to reach the highest standard of development.** . . . {CC 371.4}

He desires the youth to cultivate every power of their being, and **to bring every faculty into active exercise.** . . . [law of exertion] **Let them look to Christ as the pattern after which they are to be fashioned.** [law of worship] The holy ambition that He revealed in His life they are to cherish--**an ambition to make the world better for their having lived in it.** [the law of love] This is the work to which they are called. {CC 371.5}

You want now to . . . **so relate yourself to society and to life that you may answer the purpose of God in your creation.** [level seven moral development, understanding friend of God who loves God and others, lives in harmony with God's design laws and carries out in their lives God's purposes for their lives.] {CC 371.6}



So Jonah had character issues to work out for himself, is this a lesson for us?

MONDAY

The lesson points out that while Jonah was in the belly of the fish, he prayed to God and specifically focused his mind on the Lord's holy temple.

The lesson asks why would Jonah focus on the temple?

What is the significance of the temple in this context?

What is the purpose of the temple?

The temple was given by God as a teaching tool to teach truths about the sin problem and God's solution for it. There are multiple truths and have multiple threads that are simultaneously true and woven together.

So Jonah looking to the temple was looking for salvation for deliverance, temporal perhaps, but most certainly eternal deliverance. What do we learn about God's plan of salvation by looking at the temple?

The Temple/sanctuary/little theater teaches at least the following:

- Jesus Christ—destroy this temple and in three days He would raise it again. The entire structure teaches us about Jesus:
 - Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb
 - Jesus is the High Priest
 - Jesus is the Lamp—the light that lightens the world
 - Jesus is the showbread, the bread of heaven the living Word of God made flesh that we internalize
 - Jesus is the wine—the perfect character of love that we ingest
 - Jesus sinless life is the blood carried in the vessels that brings life to us and cleanses from sin
 - Jesus is the fragrance of God the incense that draws us to God
 - Jesus is the pure gold of sinless perfection



- Jesus' righteousness is the pure white robes of godly character
- Jesus is the way through the veil to at-one-ment with God
- Jesus is the lid to the ark that reconciles and restores the universe to unity or oneness thus Jesus is the place and means of reconciliation and restoration—the mercy seat
- The plan of salvation
 - Human beings are apart from God spread throughout the four corners in the world represented by the tribes of Israel
 - God's people, represented by the Levites, are witnesses, and go out to bring the people into the body of Christ, the church, or in the metaphor to the temple
 - The brazen altar represents the unconverted hearts that receive Christ, the sin offering sacrificed upon it and the blood poured out at the base
 - The golden altar represents the converted heart—it is in the holy place, representing the church with the lampstand, the word of God and Christ the living Word, and the Showbread and wine. The heart of the converted prays to God and incense burned on the golden altar.
 - The ark in the most holy place represents the universe reconciled to God again—the Shekinah represents the Father, the angels the angelic heavenly host, the box represents the saved sinners who are covered in gold, the righteousness of Christ and who have partaken the manna-the word of God the truth, and been won to trust and opened their heart and had the living law of God written upon their hearts (represented by the 10 Commandments), and though they were dead in trespass and sin they came to live and bore the fruits of righteousness (represented by Aaron's rod that budded).
- Our own hearts and minds, our bodies our Spirit Temples
 - Jesus said that unless we eat his flesh and drink His blood we have non part with Him. The flesh of the sacrificial animal represents the words of truth, which are also represented by the unleavened bread. We are to ingest the truth, lies are dispelled, as flesh or bread taken into the body become building blocks to our physical bodies, so truths taken into the mind become building blocks to our beliefs, schemas, worldviews and wins us to trust. In trust we open the heart and God pours His love into our hearts, we receive the life of Christ, the character of Christ represented by the blood. And it is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me.
- The Corporate temple, the church and body of Christ



- Each of us are living stones built together into a house for the Lord, thus the temple also teaches God's plan for the heavenly sanctuary, built out of living beings who have been fitted for heaven.

Here are some historic quotes to consider:

The first tabernacle, built according to God's directions, was indeed blessed of Him. The people thus were preparing themselves to worship in the temple not made with hands--a temple in the heavens. The stones of the Temple built by Solomon were all prepared at the quarry and then brought to the Temple site. They came together without the sound of ax or hammer. The timbers were also fitted in the forest. The furniture was likewise brought to this house all prepared for use. {3MR 231.3}

Even so, the mighty cleaver of truth has **taken out a people from the quarry of the world and is fitting this people, who profess to be the children of God, for a place in His heavenly temple.** We want the cleaver of truth to do its work for us. **We are taken from the quarry of the world. The material must not be a dead substance but living souls, and these souls must be brought out of the quarry of the world, where the hand of God can fit them for the temple in heaven.** We are here as probationers, and we must pass under the hand of God. All rough edges and rough surfaces must be removed and **we must be stones fitted for the building.** We are brought into church capacity with defects of character, but we must not retain them. **We must be fitted and squared for the building. We must be "laborers together with God," for we are "God's husbandry," we are "God's building."** In view of this we must see that our temple is not defiled with sin. We should be lively stones, not dead ones, but live ones that will reflect the image of Christ. We must be worshipers in spirit and in truth. {3MR 231.4}

This world is God's workshop, and **every stone [every person] that can be used in the heavenly temple must be hewed and polished until it is a tried and precious stone, fitted for its place in the Lord's building.** But if we refuse to be trained and disciplined, we shall be as stones that will not be hewed and polished, and that are cast aside at last as useless. – {ML 268.3}

It may be that much work needs to be done ... , **that you are a rough stone,** which must be squared and polished before it can fill a place in God's temple.



You need not be surprised if with hammer and chisel **God cuts away the sharp corners of your character** until you are prepared to fill the place He has for you. No human being can accomplish this work. Only by God can it be done. And be assured that **He will not strike one useless blow. His every blow is struck in love, for your eternal happiness.** He knows your infirmities and works to restore, not to destroy. – {ML 268.4}

A character polished after the similitude of a palace ... may shine in the courts of the Lord forever. – {ML 268.5}

The trials of life are God's workmen, **to remove the impurities and roughness from our character.** [cleansing of the sanctuary] Their hewing, squaring, and chiseling, their burnishing and polishing, is a painful process; it is hard to be pressed down to the grinding wheel. **But the stone is brought forth prepared to fill its place in the heavenly temple.** Upon no useless material does the Master bestow such careful, thorough work. Only His precious stones are polished after the similitude of a palace." {MB 10.3}

Paul and the other apostles, and all the righteous who have lived since then, have acted their part in the building of the temple. **But the structure is not yet complete. We who are living in this age have a work to do, a part to act. We are to bring to the foundation material that will stand the test of fire—gold, silver, and precious stones, “polished after the similitude of a palace” (Psalm 144:12).** To those who thus build for God, Paul speaks words of encouragement... : “If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.” ... **The Christian who faithfully presents the word of life, leading men and women into the way of holiness and peace, is bringing to the foundation material that will endure, and in the kingdom of God He will be honored as a wise builder.**—The Acts of the Apostles, 598, 599.

TUESDAY

The lesson focuses on the success of Jonah's message, that the people repented, then asks, “What does it mean to truly repent of our sins?”

Is there a difference between repentance and confession?



Is repentance in any way connected with justification?

Is repentance needed for salvation? Is justification needed for salvation?

What leads us to repentance?

“God’s kindness leads you toward repentance” (Romans 2:4 NIV84).

So it is the truth about God, His character of love manifested to us in Christ that leads us to repentance—and what is repentance?

What of these description?

No repentance is genuine that does not work reformation. **The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover unconfessed and unforsaken sin. It is a principle of life that transforms the character and controls the conduct.** Holiness is wholeness for God, entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven. From Heaven with Love 369.2

The Bible does not teach that the sinner must repent before he can heed the invitation of Christ, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. It is the virtue that goes forth from Christ, that leads to genuine repentance. Peter made the matter clear in his statement to the Israelites when he said, “Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” Acts 5:31. **We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ.** SC 26.2

Christ is the source of every right impulse. **He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin.** Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our hearts. SC 26.3

So repentance is a gift from God to us, it is a change in heart, it is a result of coming to Christ, it is a result of experiencing God’s goodness as manifest in Christ, and salvation is not experienced without it.



It is an outworking of the Spirit of truth and love, bringing truth and love to enlighten the soul to the horror of sin, the reality of the sickness of fear and selfishness and the beauty of God and His character, methods and principles of love. That truth impacts the soul to surrender to Christ longing for a new heart and right spirit, we have dissatisfaction with the things of the world and long to be more and more like Jesus. We are therefore reborn, with new heart motives. This is genuine repentance and it is setting the heart right with God again, it is the justifying of the individual sinner with God, putting the heart that is at enmity back into love and trust with God again.

This is different than the justification of the species achieved by Jesus as our substitute.

When Adam sinned, not only was he as an individual out of harmony with God (at enmity with God), but the entire species was also out of harmony—because every human is descended from Adam and born infected with fear and selfishness. After Adam and before Jesus, there were no sinless human beings—none. Jesus became human to remedy that situation, to become the connecting link to heaven, the one human being in which God’s design law of life was perfectly lived out, thereby restoring harmony with God’s design law into the human family.

In so doing, Jesus became the new head of a renewed and cleansed humanity—our second Adam.

In the person of Jesus Christ, the species human was justified—set right, put right—with God. He became human and was tempted in all points just like we are, yet He was without sin (Hebrews 4:15). In the human life experience of Jesus, He accomplished something real, something no other human could, something objective: He developed with the use of *only* His human abilities a perfect, sinless *human character*, thereby restoring God’s design law of love back into the species human. In the person of Jesus, the human race was put right with God—we were justified.

Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, **once made perfect**, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him (Hebrews 5:8, 9 NIV84).

Wait ... wasn’t Jesus always perfect?

He was always sinless, yes, but Bible perfection means maturity of character and character cannot be created, it must be developed by the choices of the sentient being.



Jesus developed, as a human, a perfect, mature sinless character, restoring God's law of love into the species human. In so doing, He as our substitute set the species human right with God; i.e., He justified the species and became our remedy to sin, the source of salvation for all who follow Him.

When we are won to trust, we open the heart and receive the indwelling Spirit, who takes the character of Christ and reproduces it in us, such that "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20 NIV84). This is true biblical justification.

As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might **become the righteousness of God**" (2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV84).

God offered him, so that by his blood he should become the means by which people's sins are forgiven through their faith in him. God did this **in order to demonstrate that he is righteous**. In the past he was patient and overlooked people's sins; but in the present time he deals with their sins, in order to **demonstrate his righteousness**. In this way **God shows that he himself is righteous** and that he **puts right everyone** who believes in Jesus (Romans 3:25,26 GNT, emphasis mine).

WEDNESDAY

The lesson focuses on Jonah's concern with self, fear of what others would think of him, fear of being considered a false prophet and thus he was angry when Nineveh didn't get destroyed.

At its root, what was Jonah's problem? His primary motive was self; his primary focus was self; his primary concern was self.

It wasn't merely that he was tempted with selfishness, it was that he focused upon himself; he did focus upon love for God, concerned about God's reputation, concerned about God's heart—the pain God would experience to lose all His children in Nineveh, and Jonah didn't have love for the people of Nineveh. If Jonah loved the people of Nineveh like you love your children what would his response have been when they repented and God spared them?



So, this illustrates that God was not only working to save the people of Nineveh, but also to heal and restore Jonah, to bring Jonah to the point of realizing that he still had a serious residual infection of fear and selfishness in his heart that needed removal.

What lessons do we learn from this to apply to our lives today?

THURSDAY

The lesson asks us to read the book of Jude, this is from *The Remedy*:

1Jude, an ambassador and representative of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, To those who have responded to God's call — who are being transformed by God's healing love and nurtured by Jesus Christ:

2May you continue to grow in the abundance of God's mercy, peace, and love.

3My dear friends, I have longed to write to you about God's healing plan (his Remedy in which we share), but instead, I must write to warn you to defend the truth about God as revealed by Jesus — this precious truth that is the foundation of our faith and the secret with which we have been entrusted.4Scripture from long ago tells that those who reject this truth remain terminal and cannot be healed. Such people have slipped in among you and are attempting to twist the truth about God. These people, even though they purport to be believers in God, are actually godless because they have rejected the truth about God's true character and principles, and instead, teach a powerless gospel that misrepresents God, fails to transform lives, and denies that Jesus Christ is our Lord and the source of our healing and restoration.

5So let me remind you—even though you are well aware of these facts—that the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt to be his partner in teaching the truth about God and distributing his healing Remedy throughout the world. Unfortunately, God found it necessary to put into the grave those who rejected him and worked to stop his plan.6And the angels who rejected the truth about God chose to leave heaven and have become so settled into lies about God that no amount of truth and love can reach them; their minds are bound in darkness, and they are awaiting the final Day when the diagnosis of all will be revealed.7In a similar manner, the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah rejected the truth about God,



and their minds became so settled into lies about him that they were beyond healing: they gave themselves over to sensual indulgence and perversion. They stand as evidence of what will happen to all those who reject the truth about God and are exposed to eternal fire.

8In the very same way, these infiltrators create imaginary fantasies about God and the universe. They abuse their bodies, reject divine authority, and make fun of holy beings.⁹But even the archangel Michael, when he raised Moses from the dead, did not slander the devil who tried to stop him and claim Moses for himself. Michael merely said, "Stand aside; you have no right or authority here."¹⁰Yet these infiltrators make fun of truths they don't even comprehend; they reject reason, and instead, like animals, do whatever they feel by instinct, thereby destroying the capacity for knowing truth, and causing their own destruction.

11Oh, how sad—how terribly sad and horrible it will be for them! They have chosen, just like Cain, to reject truth and go with passion; they have sought, like Balaam, to reject beneficence and seek riches for self; they, like Korah, have rejected humility and sought to promote themselves in power and authority.¹²These people are festering cankers at your fellowship meals, claiming to be Christian but seeking only to get the best for themselves, trying to get attention and recognition, or gorging themselves without regard for anyone else. They are like clouds without rain—useless and blown around by the wind; they are like leafless, fruitless trees, uprooted and completely dead.¹³They are like the waves of the sea — tossed in any direction their feelings are surging; their lives are turbulent whirlpools of shame. They are like the lost stars of heaven on their way to eternal nothingness and darkness.

14It was Enoch — the seventh descendant of Adam — who prophesied about people like this: "Be aware, the Lord is coming to earth with millions of his holy angels¹⁵in order to bring about the accurate diagnosis of all things—to bring all selfish beings face to face with their own terminal condition, with the pain and suffering they have caused, and with all the lies about God they have told."¹⁶These people are complainers, faultfinders, criticizers, always making excuses for themselves and blaming others; they only care about themselves and constantly follow their own selfish desires; they brag about themselves and use flattery to manipulate and exploit whomever they can.



17But, my dear friends, remember what the ambassadors of our Lord Jesus Christ warned us would happen.18They said, "In the last days, there will be people who laugh at truth, make fun of godliness, and prefer to follow their own passions, lusts, and desires."19It is people like these who cause factions to form, who split families in two, who break congregations apart—and they have come in among you. They follow their own base instincts and feelings, for they have rejected God's Spirit.

20But you, dear friends, as you talk to God — with your minds enlightened by the Holy Spirit — continue to build your characters and relationships upon the holy truth about God and on his methods and principles.21Continue to be conduits of God's love as you allow the mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to heal you and bring you back into full unity with him and give you life everlasting.

22Be merciful to those who don't understand and who live in doubt;23don't stand idly by when you see others destroying themselves in ignorance and selfishness, but proclaim God's healing Remedy and rescue them from burning up their lives in sin. Be kind and patient with sinners, but hate the selfishness that covers them like putrid, germ-saturated clothing.

24To him who is able to heal you completely so that you can stand in his glorious presence with perfect character, rejoicing when we meet him face to face,25to the only God — our Savior through Jesus Christ — be all glory, majesty, power and authority from before time began, and now, and forevermore! Amen.

FRIDAY

read and discuss question 2



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

On **Saturday, September 11** we will have **two lessons and no Q&A session** after. Lesson 13, The Ultimate Rest, will begin at 9:30 AM. We will begin the first lesson in *Present Truth in Deuteronomy* at 10:35 AM.

We will *not* have Bible Study Class on Saturday, September 18 as the team will be in Orlando, FL sharing free materials at the AACC (American Association of Christian Counselors).

God is Love Children's Book Available on Amazon! We are happy to announce that our children's book, God is Love, is now up on Amazon and is available for prime shipping!

NOTES—my notes for each class are available for download on our website under our Bible Study tab.