

Lessons from the book of Jeremiah Lessons for the 2nd Quarter, 2012

General Introduction

‘Naturally of a timid and shrinking disposition, Jeremiah longed for the peace and quiet of a life of retirement, where he need not witness the continued impenitence of his beloved nation. His heart was wrung with anguish over the ruin wrought by sin. “O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears,” he mourned, “that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them.” Jeremiah 9:1, 2.

‘Cruel were the mockings he was called upon to endure. His sensitive soul was pierced through and through by the arrows of derision hurled at him by those who despised his messages and made light of his burden for their conversion. “I was a derision to all my people,” he declared, “and their song all the day.” “I am in derision daily, everyone mocketh me.” . . .

‘When called to drink of the cup of tribulation and sorrow, and when tempted in his misery to say, “My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord,” he recalled the providences of God in his behalf and triumphantly exclaimed, “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.” Lamentations 3:18, 22-26.’

Prophets & Kings, pages 419-421.

‘Each of the ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours, so that their prophesying is in force for us. “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” 1 Corinthians 10:11.’

Selected Messages, book 3, page 338.

‘I am instructed to say to our churches, Study the Testimonies. They are written for our admonition and encouragement, upon whom the ends of the world are come. If God’s people will not study these messages that are sent to them from time to time, they are guilty of rejecting light. Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, God is sending instruction to His people. Heed the instruction; follow the light. The Lord has a controversy with His people because in the past they have not heeded His instruction and followed His guidance.’

Selected Messages, book 3, page 358.

Compiler’s Note

Unlike other Biblical prophetic books, the writings of Jeremiah reveal the inmost spiritual thoughts and feelings concerning the work he has been called by God to do. His loneliness, his fears, his reactions, his prayers, his sorrows, and his longings for his people are as a thread running through the book, which make his prophetic writings both personal and poignant. Jeremiah is revealed as a young man who has been well trained in the books of the law, so that numerous references are made to the writings of Moses, especially the book of Deuteronomy. The analogies that he draws on to strengthen his messages show his considerable knowledge of the natural world of the Creator God to whom we owe our allegiance. The book of Jeremiah is unique among prophetic books as it more closely resembles a prophetic notebook. There is no pattern or shape in the book, and therefore no sequence to follow in study. He was prophesying primarily in the reigns of four kings – Josiah, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. Interestingly a good portion of Jeremiah was a rewrite, a second edition after the king had cut and burned the original scroll. Jeremiah 36:27-28, 32. Chapter 52, the concluding words were not written by Jeremiah at all. These lessons therefore look at the major themes in the book to provide valuable understanding for the last generation before the return of Jesus.

Lesson 1: April 1-7 ‘Say not I am a child’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Sing unto the Lord, praise ye the Lord: for He hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evil doers.’ Jeremiah 20:13.

STUDY HELP: *Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 330.

LESSON AIM: To consider Jeremiah, the young man whom God chose to be a prophet.

Introduction

‘Bible history stays the fainting heart with the hope of God’s mercy. We need not despair when we see that others have struggled through discouragements like our own, have fallen into temptations even as we have done, and yet have recovered their ground and been blessed of God. The words of inspiration comfort and cheer the erring soul. Although the patriarchs and apostles were subject to human frailties, yet through faith they obtained a good report, fought their battles in the strength of the Lord, and conquered gloriously. Thus may we trust in the virtue of the atoning sacrifice and be overcomers in the name of Jesus.’ *Conflict & Courage*, page 368.

‘Let no man despise thy youth’

1. What does the Bible reveal about the youthful age of the prophet Jeremiah? Jeremiah 1:6, 7.

NOTE: ‘He [Timothy] was a mere lad when chosen by God as a teacher; but so fixed were his principles by a correct education that he was fitted for this important position. He bore his responsibilities with Christlike meekness. He was faithful, steadfast, and true, and Paul selected him to be his companion in labour and travel. Lest Timothy should meet with slights because of his youthfulness, Paul wrote to him, “Let no man despise thy youth.” He could safely do this, because Timothy was not self-sufficient, but continually sought guidance. There are many youth who move from impulse rather than from judgment. But Timothy inquired at every step, “Is this the way of the Lord?” He had no especially brilliant talents, but he consecrated all his abilities to the service of God, and this made his work valuable. The Lord found in him a mind that He could mould and fashion for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. God will use the youth today as He used Timothy, if they will submit to His guidance. It is your privilege to be God’s missionaries.’ *Conflict & Courage*, page 344.

2. In which town of priests, in Benjamin, about three miles north of Jerusalem, was Jeremiah born? Jeremiah 1:1. Read also Joshua 21:18, 19.

NOTE: ‘A member of the Levitical priesthood, Jeremiah had been trained from childhood for holy service. In those happy years of preparation he little realised that he had been ordained from birth to be “a prophet unto the nations;” and when the divine call came, he was overwhelmed with a sense of his unworthiness. “Ah, Lord God!” he exclaimed, “behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.” Jeremiah 1:5, 6.’ *Prophets & Kings*, page 407.

‘Hear the instruction of thy father’

3. What was the name of Jeremiah’s father and what was his work? Jeremiah 1:1.

NOTE: ‘Fathers and mothers who make God first in their households, who teach their children that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, glorify God before angels and before men by presenting to the world a well-ordered, well-disciplined family, a family that love and obey God instead of rebelling against Him. Christ is not a stranger in their homes; His name is a household name, revered and glorified. Angels delight in a home where God reigns supreme and the children are taught to reverence religion, the Bible, and their Creator. Such families can claim the promise, “Them that honour Me I will honour.” *Adventist Home*, page 27.

4. What references in Jeremiah’s prophecies reveal his deep knowledge of the Scriptures? Deuteronomy 28:49 (compare Jeremiah 5:15); Deuteronomy 4:27, 28 (compare Jeremiah 5:19); Psalm 121:1, 2 (compare Jeremiah 3:23).

NOTE: ‘Jeremiah called their attention repeatedly to the counsels given in Deuteronomy. More than any other of the prophets, he emphasised the teachings of the Mosaic law and showed how these might bring the highest spiritual blessing to the nation and to every individual heart. “Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein,” he pleaded, “and ye shall find rest for your souls.” Jeremiah 6:16.’ *Prophets & Kings*, page 411.

‘The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times’

5. Through what examples does Jeremiah reveal his close observations of the natural world? Jeremiah 12:9, Jeremiah 8:7, Jeremiah 13:23, Jeremiah 17:11.

NOTE: ‘Although the earth was blighted with the curse, nature was still to be man’s lesson book. It could not now represent goodness only; for evil was everywhere present, marring earth and sea and air with its defiling touch. Where once was written only the character of God, the knowledge of good, was now written also the character of Satan, the knowledge of evil. From nature, which now revealed the knowledge of good and evil, man was continually to receive warning as to the results of sin. Many illustrations from nature are used by the Bible writers; and as we observe the things of the natural world, we shall be enabled, under the guiding of the Holy Spirit, more fully to understand the lessons of God’s Word. In the natural world God has placed in the hands of the children of men the key to unlock the treasure house of His Word. The unseen is illustrated by the seen; divine wisdom, eternal truth, infinite grace, are understood by the things that God has made.’ *Child Guidance*, page 46.

“Truth is perished,” he [Jeremiah] mourned, “and is cut off from their mouth.” “The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My people know not the judgment of the Lord.” Jeremiah 7:28; 8:7.’ *Prophets & Kings*, page 414.

6. To whom did Jeremiah point in his teaching against idolatry, and in whom did he put his trust? Jeremiah 10:10. Compare Jeremiah 10:11. Jeremiah 32:17.

NOTE: ‘Those who claim to be Christians, who profess to believe the truth, and yet drink at the polluted fountains of infidelity, and by precept and example draw others away from the cold, snow-waters of Lebanon, are fools, though they profess themselves to be wise. “Hear ye the word which the Lord speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. . . . But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King.’ *Christian Education*, page 103.

‘Train up a child’

7. Which prophetess and her husband were the aunt and uncle of Jeremiah? 2 Kings 22:14, Jeremiah 32:7.

NOTE: 'Already the anger of the Lord was kindled against the people. Overwhelmed with sorrow and dismay, Josiah rent his garments and bowed before God in agony of spirit, seeking pardon for the sins of an impenitent nation. At that time the prophetess Huldah was living in Jerusalem, near the temple. The mind of the king, filled with anxious foreboding, reverted to her, and he determined to inquire of the Lord through this chosen messenger to learn, if possible, whether by any means within his power he might save erring Judah, now on the verge of ruin. The gravity of the situation and the respect in which he held the prophetess led him to choose as his messengers to her the first men of the kingdom. "Go ye," he bade them, "inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us." 2 Kings 22:13. Through Huldah the Lord sent Josiah word that Jerusalem's ruin could not be averted. Even should the people now humble themselves before God, they could not escape their punishment. So long had their senses been deadened by wrongdoing that, if judgment should not come upon them, they would soon return to the same sinful course.' *Daughters of God*, page 44.

8. How do we know that Jeremiah was a singer and musician? 2 Chronicles 35:25.

NOTE: The sorrow of the prophet over the utter perversity of those who would have been the spiritual light of the world, his sorrow over the fate of Zion and of the people carried captive to Babylon, is revealed in the lamentations [poems that could be sung] he has left on record as a memorial of the folly of turning from the counsels of Jehovah to human wisdom. Amid the ruin wrought, Jeremiah could still declare, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed;" and his constant prayer was, "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord." Lamentations 3:22, 40.

'Thou shalt not take thee a wife'

9. How did God instruct the young prophet concerning hopes he may have had for marriage? Jeremiah 16:2. And what promises does He give for today?

- 'When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.' Psalm 27:10.
- 'For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall He be called.' Isaiah 54:5.
- 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands.' Isaiah 49:15, 16.
- 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.' Matthew 28:20.

NOTE: 'The lesson is for all time. We are to follow the Lamb of God whithersoever He goeth. His guidance is to be chosen, His companionship valued above the companionship of earthly friends. Christ says, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." Matthew 10:37.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 223.

10. Whom did God provide for Jeremiah as a friend, confidant and scribe through all his experiences? Jeremiah 36:4-8, 14-19; Jeremiah 43:6, 7.

NOTE: 'The labours of Barnabas in Antioch were richly blessed, and many were added to the number of believers there. As the work developed, Barnabas felt the need of suitable help in order to advance in the opening providences of God, and he went to Tarsus to seek for Paul, who, after his departure from Jerusalem some time before, had been labouring in "the regions of Syria and Cilicia," proclaiming "the faith which once he destroyed." Galatians 1:21, 23. Barnabas was successful in finding Paul and in persuading him to return with him as a companion in ministry. In the populous city of Antioch, Paul found an excellent field of labour. His learning, wisdom, and zeal exerted a powerful influence over the inhabitants and frequenters of that city of culture; and he proved just the help that Barnabas needed. For a year the two disciples laboured unitedly in faithful ministry, bringing to many a saving knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth, the world's Redeemer.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 156.

'Lest I die'

11. How does Jeremiah reveal his physical fear of suffering and imprisonment, and his human recoiling from derision and mocking even by those of his own city? Jeremiah 37:20; Jeremiah 38:26; Lamentations 3:14; Jeremiah 20:7, last part; Jeremiah 11:18-21.

NOTE: 'Naturally of a timid and shrinking disposition, Jeremiah longed for the peace and quiet of a life of retirement, where he need not witness the continued impenitence of his beloved nation. His heart was wrung with anguish over the ruin wrought by sin. The experiences through which Jeremiah passed in the days of his youth and also in the later years of his ministry, taught him the lesson that "the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." He learned to pray, "O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in Thine anger, lest Thou bring me to nothing" (Jeremiah 10:23, 24). When called to drink of the cup of tribulation and sorrow, and when tempted in his misery to say, "My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord," he recalled the providences of God on his behalf and triumphantly exclaimed, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him.'" *Conflict & Courage*, page 237.

12. Although he was afraid of torture and imprisonment, how did he show his courage when carrying out the Lord's duties? Jeremiah 26:8-16.

NOTE: 'Had the prophet been intimidated by the threatening attitude of those high in authority, his message would have been without effect, and he would have lost his life; but the courage with which he delivered the solemn warning commanded the

respect of the people and turned the princes of Israel in his favour. They reasoned with the priests and false prophets, showing them how unwise would be the extreme measures they advocated, and their words produced a reaction in the minds of the people. Thus God raised up defenders for His servant.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 418.

'Those who are loyal to God's law will not always find the way smooth. God has not promised His people exemption from trials, but He has promised that which is far better. He has said: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness." "The God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation." "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth." All who love and fear God will suffer persecution. But Jesus will be near to sustain everyone who is afflicted for the truth's sake.' *Signs of the Times*, December 3 1885.

13. How did God assess the young men whom He chose as His messengers? 2 Peter 1:21.

NOTE: 'Prophecy has been fulfilling, line upon line. The more firmly we stand under the banner of the third angel's message, the more clearly shall we understand the prophecy of Daniel; for the Revelation is the supplement of Daniel. The more fully we accept the light presented by the Holy Spirit through the consecrated servants of God, the deeper and surer, even as the eternal throne, will appear the truths of ancient prophecy; we shall be assured that men of God spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. Men must themselves be under the influence of the Holy Spirit in order to understand the Spirit's utterances through the prophets. These messages were given, not for those that uttered the prophecies, but for us who are living amid the scenes of their fulfilment.' *Selected Messages, book 2*, page 114.

Lesson 2 April 8-14 'I ordained thee a prophet'

MEMORY VERSE: 'For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' 2 Peter 1:21

STUDY HELP: *Reflecting Christ*, page 207.

LESSON AIM: To study how Jeremiah became a prophet of the Lord.

Introduction

'I have set thee for a tower and a fortress among My people, that thou mayest know and try their way.' Jeremiah 6:27.

'Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets, and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father. Before this time the awfully solemn declaration has gone forth, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.'" *Early Writings*, page 71.

'I cannot speak'

1. How was Jeremiah chosen to be a prophet? Jeremiah 1:4, 5. Compare 2 Peter 1:21.

NOTE: 'Before the entrance of sin, Adam enjoyed open communion with his Maker; but since man separated himself from God by transgression, the human race has been cut off from this high privilege. By the plan of redemption, however, a way has been opened whereby the inhabitants of the earth may still have connection with heaven. God has communicated with men by His Spirit, and divine light has been imparted to the world by revelations to His chosen servants. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).' *Lift Him Up*, page 117.

2. What was the young Jeremiah's reaction? Jeremiah 1:6. Compare Isaiah 6:1-5; Exodus 3:11; Exodus 4:10-11.

NOTE: 'Among those who had hoped for a permanent spiritual revival as the result of the reformation under Josiah was Jeremiah, called of God to the prophetic office while still a youth, in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign. A member of the Levitical priesthood, Jeremiah had been trained from childhood for holy service. In those happy years of preparation he little realised that he had been ordained from birth to be "a prophet unto the nations;" and when the divine call came, he was overwhelmed with a sense of his unworthiness. "Ah, Lord God!" he exclaimed, "behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." Jeremiah 1:5, 6. In the youthful Jeremiah, God saw one who would be true to his trust and who would stand for the right against great opposition. In childhood he had proved faithful; and now he was to endure hardness, as a good soldier of the cross.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 407.

'My words in thy mouth'

3. How did God reassure Jeremiah that he would be able to speak for God? Jeremiah 1:9.

NOTE: 'God said to Jeremiah, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee." Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched His servant's mouth, saying, "Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth." Jeremiah 1:7-9. And He bids us go forth to speak the words He gives us, feeling His holy touch upon our lips. Christ has given to the church a sacred charge. Every member should be a channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches

of Christ. There is nothing that the Saviour desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and His character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Saviour's love. All heaven is waiting for men and women through whom God can reveal the power of Christianity. The church is God's agency for the proclamation of truth, empowered by Him to do a special work.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 600.

4. What was the theme of God's message to Judah through Jeremiah? Jeremiah 3:12, 13.

NOTE: 'He will look upon no trembling suppliant without raising him up. He who through His own atonement provided for man an infinite fund of moral power, will not fail to employ this power in our behalf. We may take our sins and sorrows to His feet; for He loves us. His every look and word invites our confidence. He will shape and mould our characters according to His own will. In the whole Satanic force there is not power to overcome one soul who in simple trust casts himself on Christ. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." Isaiah 40:29. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The Lord says, "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God." "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you." 1 John 1:9; Jeremiah 3:13; Ezekiel 36:25.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 157-158.

'Repent'

5. Which other prophets bore the same message? Ezekiel 14:6; Hosea 12:6; Joel 2:12-13; Zechariah 1:3-4.

NOTE: 'The Lord seeks to save, not to destroy. He delights in the rescue of sinners. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezekiel 33:11). By warnings and entreaties He calls the wayward to cease from their evil-doing and to turn to Him and live. He gives His chosen messengers a holy boldness, that those who hear may fear and be brought to repentance. How firmly the man of God rebuked the king [Jereboam]! And this firmness was essential; in no other way could the existing evils have been rebuked. The Lord gave His servant boldness, that an abiding impression might be made on those who heard. The messengers of the Lord are never to fear the face of man, but are to stand unflinchingly for the right. So long as they put their trust in God, they need not fear; for He who gives them their commission gives them also the assurance of His protecting care.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 202.

6. What was the message of John the Baptist, the greatest of the prophets? Matthew 3:1-2.

NOTE: 'In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, such a work as that of John is to be done. God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. As a people who believe in Christ's soon coming, we have a message to bear, "Prepare to meet thy God." Our message must be as direct as was the message of John. He rebuked kings for their iniquity. Notwithstanding that his life was imperilled, he did not hesitate to declare God's word. And our work in this age must be done as faithfully. In order to give such a message as John gave, we must have a spiritual experience like his. The same work must be wrought in us. We must behold God, and in beholding Him, lose sight of self.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 272.

'Why will ye die?'

7. What is God's purpose in all prophecy? 2 Chronicles 7:14, 15, Proverbs 1:23.

NOTE: 'God does not desire the destruction of any. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Ezekiel 33:11. Throughout the period of probationary time His Spirit is entreating men to accept the gift of life. It is only those who reject His pleading that will be left to perish. God has declared that sin must be destroyed as an evil ruinous to the universe. Those who cling to sin will perish in its destruction.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 123.

"Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezekiel 18:23, 31, 32; 33:11.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 127.

8. What words of repentance did Jeremiah encourage the people to bring to God? Jeremiah 3:22, last part-25. Compare also Hosea 14:1-3.

NOTE: "'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help." "Return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously. . . . I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for Mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon... Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein." The Lord is infinitely merciful and gracious. He is waiting for us to repent and turn to Him with humble confession, saying, We will take Thy way, O Lord; we will no longer walk in the way of our own counsels. Have mercy on us and save us and those who have erred in following a path not cast up for the ransomed of the Lord. The time has come for the renunciation of all self-confidence. The time has come to follow the Lord's way. He has given instruction for all who will be guided by Him, who have faith in His word, and courage to go forward. God calls upon those who have walked in paths of their own choosing to return to Him. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for

He will abundantly pardon.' *General Conference Bulletin*, July 1, 1900.

'Be zealous therefore and repent'

9. How does the message to the Laodicean church make the same appeal? Revelation 3:19, 20.

NOTE: 'The counsel of the true Witness does not represent those who are lukewarm as in a hopeless case. There is yet a chance to remedy their state, and the Laodicean message is full of encouragement. It is the worthiness of Christ that must save us, His blood that must cleanse us. But we have efforts to make. We must do what we can, be zealous and repent, then believe that God accepts us.' *Our High Calling*, page 351.

'True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as to be brought before God only; they may be wrongs that should be confessed to individuals who have suffered injury through them; or they may be of a public character, and should then be as publicly confessed. But all confession should be definite and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you are guilty.' *Steps to Christ*, page 38.

10. As the everlasting gospel nears its close, what message is to be given to all the world? Revelation 14: 6, 7.

NOTE: 'John beheld an angel flying through the midst of heaven, warning men of the final judgments of God. He proclaimed the position of those who heeded his warning, and who would escape the seven last plagues. He announced them as God's people, and called attention to their peculiar character: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." The time for the fulfilment of this prophecy has come. We hear the sound of this very message calling the attention of men and women to the broken law of God, and demanding repentance and reform.' *Review & Herald*, January 31, 1888.

'Be not dismayed at their faces'

11. What was Jeremiah told would be the result to himself if he did not speak the words of God? Jeremiah 1:17, last part.

NOTE: 'It was a great cross for me to relate to the erring what had been shown me concerning them. It caused me great distress to see others troubled or grieved. And when obliged to declare the messages, I would often soften them down, and make them appear as favourable for the individual as I could, and then would go by myself and weep in agony of spirit. I looked upon those who seemed to have only their own souls to care for, and thought if I were in their condition I would not murmur. It was hard to relate the plain, cutting testimonies given me of God. I anxiously watched the result, and if the persons reprov'd rose up against the reproof, and afterward opposed the truth, these queries would arise in my mind: Did I deliver the message just as I should? Could there not have been some way to save them? And then such distress pressed upon my soul that I often felt that death would be a welcome messenger, and the grave a sweet resting-place. I did not realise that I was unfaithful in thus questioning and doubting, and did not see the danger and sin of such a course, until in vision I was taken into the presence of Jesus. He looked upon me with a frown, and turned His face from me. It is not possible to describe the terror and agony I then felt. I fell upon my face before Him, but had no power to utter a word. Oh, how I longed to be covered and hid from that dreadful frown! Then could I realise, in some degree, what the feelings of the lost will be when they cry to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Revelation 6:16. Presently an angel bade me rise, and the sight that met my eyes can hardly be described. Before me was a company whose hair and garments were torn, and whose countenances were the very picture of despair and horror. They came close to me, and rubbed their garments upon mine. As I looked at my garments, I saw that they were stained with blood. Again I fell like one dead, at the feet of my accompanying angel. I could not plead one excuse, and longed to be away from that holy place. The angel raised me to my feet, and said: "This is not your case now, but this scene has passed before you to let you know what your situation must be if you neglect to declare to others what the Lord has revealed to you. But if you are faithful to the end, you shall eat of the tree of life, and shall drink of the river of the water of life." *Testimonies*, volume 1, pages 73-74.

12. What promise did God give twice to the youthful and timid Jeremiah? Jeremiah 1:8, 17, first part.

NOTE: 'He [Noah] dared not suppress the words of God for fear of men, or withhold his message in dread of the consequences that might result because of the opposition and hate of the wicked and unbelieving about him. He knew the power of God, and realised that God would fulfil His word.' *Signs of the Times*, April 18, 1895.

'Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ's first advent. In this time of well-nigh universal apostasy, God calls upon His messengers to proclaim His law in the spirit and power of Elias. As John the Baptist, in preparing a people for Christ's first advent, called their attention to the Ten Commandments, so we are to give, with no uncertain sound, the message: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." With the earnestness that characterised Elijah the prophet and John the Baptist, we are to strive to prepare the way for Christ's second advent. The hour of God's judgment has come, and upon the members of His church on earth rests the solemn responsibility of giving warning to those who are standing as it were on the very brink of eternal ruin. All can do something in the work. None will be pronounced guiltless before God unless they have worked earnestly and unselfishly for the salvation of souls.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 290.

Lesson 3: April 15-21

‘He is the living God’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Thus saith the Lord the maker thereof, the Lord that formed it to establish it; the Lord is His name. Call unto Me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knewest not.’ Jeremiah 33:2, 3.

STUDY HELP: *Christ Triumphant*, page 15.

LESSON AIM: To show the mighty power and pleading love of the living Creator God, contrasted with the futility of the worship of idols.

Introduction

‘Living power must attend the message of Christ’s second appearing. We must not rest until we see many souls converted to the blessed hope of the Lord’s return. In the days of the apostles the message that they bore wrought a real work, turning souls from idols to serve the living God. The work to be done today is just as real, and the truth is just as much truth; only we are to give the message with as much more earnestness as the coming of the Lord is nearer. The message for this time is positive, simple, and of the deepest importance. We must act like men and women who believe it. Waiting, watching, working, praying, warning the world, this is our work.’ *Evangelism*, page 219.

‘All heaven is astir, engaged in preparing for the day of God’s vengeance, the day of Zion’s deliverance. The time of tarrying is almost ended. The pilgrims and strangers who have so long been seeking a better country are almost home. I feel as if I must cry aloud, Homeward bound! Rapidly we are nearing the time when Christ will come to gather His redeemed to Himself.’ *Review and Herald*, November 13, 1913.

‘Will ye not tremble at My presence?’

1. How fully had Judah backslidden from the Lord? Jeremiah 5:3, 19. Jeremiah 6:16, 17; Jeremiah 7:28; Jeremiah 2:11, 12.

NOTE: “‘Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.’ Shamelessly and repeatedly had this covenant been broken. The chosen nation had “walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.” Jeremiah 7:23, 24. “Why,” the Lord inquired, “is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding?” Jeremiah 8:5. In the language of the prophet it was because they had obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God and had refused to be corrected. “Truth is perished,” he mourned, “and is cut off from their mouth.” *Prophets & Kings*, page 414.

2. To what did the living God point to establish His authority with Judah? Jeremiah 5:20-22; Jeremiah 27:5; Jeremiah 10:11-13.

NOTE: ‘Our Creator and our Commander, infinite in power, terrible in judgment, seeks by every means to bring men to see and repent of their sins. By the mouth of His servants He predicts the dangers of disobedience; He sounds the note of warning and faithfully reproves sin. His people are kept in prosperity only by His mercy, through the vigilant watchcare of chosen instrumentalities. He cannot uphold and guard a people who reject His counsel and despise His reproofs. For a time He may withhold His retributive judgments; yet He cannot always stay His hand.’ *Conflict & Courage*, page 238.

‘The Lord is the true God’

3. By contrast how did God describe the sins of idolatry and superstition among His people? Jeremiah 10:1-6, 8-9, 14-15.

NOTE: ‘The sad thing in our churches today, is that Jesus is misrepresented in the character of those who profess to be His followers. Many claim to believe in and love Jesus, while they do neither. They advocate the law of God, but are transgressors of its precepts. The first four commandments require supreme love to God. Parents, children, wife, husband, houses, lands or any other earthly treasure, whether of friends or property, are not to be loved selfishly, and thus become an idol to divert the mind, the time, the service, from God. He that loves and serves mammon cannot love and serve God supremely. When friends and relations are loved with inordinate affection, they are taking the place in the heart where God should be. “Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.” “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” Here idolatry is plainly revealed, as existing in those who claim to worship God.’ *The Home Missionary*, December 1 1894.

4. To whom was Jeremiah to point the people of Judah? Jeremiah 10:10, first part.

NOTE: The Lord has been pleased to give His people the third angel’s message as a testing message to bear to the world. John beholds a people distinct and separate from the world who refuse to worship the beast or his image, who bear God’s sign, keeping holy His Sabbath, the seventh-day, to be kept holy as a memorial of the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth. Of them the apostle writes, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” *Evangelism*, page 233.

‘Then will I utterly destroy’

5. Besides the power to create what other divine prerogative belongs to the Creator of all things? Jeremiah 10:10, last part.

NOTE: 'The wrath of God is not declared against unrepentant sinners merely because of the sins they have committed, but because, when called to repent, they choose to continue in resistance, repeating the sins of the past in defiance of the light given them. If the Jewish leaders had submitted to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, they would have been pardoned; but they were determined not to yield. In the same way, the sinner, by continued resistance, places himself where the Holy Spirit cannot influence him.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 62.

6. What will also perish in the punishments of the living God? Jeremiah 10:11, 15. Compare Exodus 12:12.

NOTE: 'By causing men to violate the second commandment, Satan aimed to degrade their conceptions of the Divine Being. By setting aside the fourth, he would cause them to forget God altogether. God's claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is based upon the fact that He is the Creator, and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. Thus it is presented in the Bible. Says the prophet Jeremiah: "The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King. . . . The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion." "Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. The portion of Jacob is not like them: for He is the former of all things." Jeremiah 10:10-12, 14-16. The Sabbath, as a memorial of God's creative power, points to Him as the maker of the heavens and the earth. Hence it is a constant witness to His existence and a reminder of His greatness, His wisdom, and His love. Had the Sabbath always been sacredly observed, there could never have been an atheist or an idolater.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 336.

'The word of His power'

7. What divine attributes are revealed in the creation of the heavens and the earth? Jeremiah 10:12

NOTE: 'But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King: at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation. Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion. When He uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures. Every man is brutish in his knowledge; every founder is confounded by his graven image; for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. The portion of Jacob is not like them: for he is the former of all things; and Israel is the rod of his inheritance: The Lord of hosts is his name." [Jeremiah 10:1, 2, 10-16.] "Thus saith the Lord; cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.'" *Christian Education*, page 103.

8. How do the things of nature testify to the power of His Word? Jeremiah 10:13.

NOTE: 'In the study of the Bible the student should be led to see the power of God's word. In the creation, "He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." He "callesth those things which be not as though they were" (Psalm 33:9; Romans 4:17); for when He calls them, they are. How often those who trusted the word of God, though in themselves utterly helpless, have withstood the power of the whole world, Enoch, pure in heart, holy in life, holding fast his faith in the triumph of righteousness against a corrupt and scoffing generation; Noah and his household against the men of his time, men of the greatest physical and mental strength and the most debased in morals; the children of Israel at the Red Sea, a helpless, terrified multitude of slaves, against the mightiest army of the mightiest nation on the globe; David, a shepherd lad, having God's promise of the throne, against Saul, the established monarch, bent on holding fast his power; Shadrach and his companions in the fire, and Nebuchadnezzar on the throne; Daniel among the lions, his enemies in the high places of the kingdom; Jesus on the cross, and the Jewish priests and rulers forcing even the Roman governor to work their will; Paul in chains led to a criminal's death, Nero the despot of a world empire.' *Education*, page 254.

'Where is Mine honour?'

9. By contrast what does God say about the foolishness of the manufactured gods that Judah had raised up for themselves? Jeremiah 10:14, Jeremiah 7:17-19. Isaiah 44:13-20.

NOTE: "'Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3). It is not alone in denying the existence of God or in bowing down to idols of wood and stone that this first commandment is broken. By many who profess to be followers of Christ, its principles are infringed, but the Lord of heaven does not acknowledge those as His children who are cherishing in their hearts anything that takes the place which God alone should hold. With many the gratification of appetite holds sway, while with others dress and love of the world are given the first place in the heart. God has given us many things in this life upon which to bestow our affections, but when we carry to excess that which in itself is lawful we become idolaters. Anything that separates our affections from God and lessens our interest in eternal things is an idol. Those who use the precious time given them by God, time that has been purchased at an infinite cost, in embellishing their homes for display, in following the fashions and customs of the world, are not only robbing their own souls of spiritual food, but are failing to give God His due. The time thus spent in the gratification of selfish desires might be employed in obtaining a knowledge of the Word of God, in cultivating our

talents, that we might render intelligent service to our Creator. God will not share a divided heart. If the world absorbs our attention, He cannot reign supreme. If this diminishes our devotion for God, it is idolatry in His eyes.' *That I May Know Him*, page 322.

10. With what poignant words does God express the hurt, and the disappointment He feels through Judah's rejection of His love? Jeremiah 2:5; Jeremiah 2:19, 20.

NOTE: 'God requires that we confess our sins and humble our hearts before Him; but at the same time we should have confidence in Him as a tender Father, who will not forsake those who put their trust in Him. Many of us walk by sight and not by faith. We believe the things that are seen but do not appreciate the precious promises given us in God's Word; and yet we cannot dishonour God more decidedly than by showing that we distrust what He says and question whether the Lord is in earnest with us or is deceiving us. God does not give us up because of our sins. We may make mistakes and grieve His Spirit, but when we repent and come to Him with contrite hearts, He will not turn us away. There are hindrances to be removed. Wrong feelings have been cherished, and there have been pride, self-sufficiency, impatience, and murmurings. All these separate us from God. Sins must be confessed; there must be a deeper work of grace in the heart.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 47.

'So shall ye prosper'

11. How did David respond when confronted by the prophet Nathan concerning his sin with Uriah and Bathsheba? Psalm 51:1-4, first part. Contrast Jeremiah 25:3-4.

NOTE: 'Thus in a sacred song to be sung in the public assemblies of his people, in the presence of the court, priests and judges, princes and men of war, and which would preserve to the latest generation the knowledge of his fall, the king of Israel recounted his sin, his repentance, and his hope of pardon through the mercy of God. Instead of endeavouring to conceal his guilt he desired that others might be instructed by the sad history of his fall. David's repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his crime. No desire to escape the judgments threatened, inspired his prayer. But he saw the enormity of his transgression against God; he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart. David did not in despair give over the struggle. In the promises of God to repentant sinners he saw the evidence of his pardon and acceptance.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 725.

12. Today how does God show that heeding the prophets and remembering that He is our Creator are still the issues that lead to life eternal? 2 Chronicles 20:20; Exodus 20:8-11; Ecclesiastes 12:1; Revelation 14:7.

NOTE: 'The light of prophecy still burns for the guidance of souls, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." It shines on the pathway of the just to commend, and on the way of the unjust to lead to repentance and conversion. Through its agency sin will be rebuked and iniquity unmasked. It is progressive in the performance of its duty to reflect light on the past, the present, and the future. If those who have received the light will appreciate and respect the testimonies of the Lord, they will see the religious life in a new light. They will be convicted. They will see the key that unlocks the mysteries that they have never understood. They will lay hold of the precious things that God has given them to profit withal and will be translated from the kingdom of darkness into God's marvellous light. Those who despise the warning will be left in blindness to become self-deceived. But those who heed it, and zealously go about the work of separating their sins from them in order to have the needed graces, will be opening the door of their hearts that the dear Saviour may come in and dwell with them. He [God] has made provision that all may be holy and happy if they choose. Sufficient light has been given to this generation, that we may learn what our duties and privileges are and enjoy the precious and solemn truths in their simplicity and power. We are accountable only for the light that shines upon us. The commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus are testing us. If we are faithful and obedient, God will delight in us, and bless us as His own chosen, peculiar people. When perfect faith and perfect love and obedience abound, working in the hearts of those who are Christ's followers, they will have a powerful influence.' *My Life Today*, page 42.

Lesson 4: April 22-28
'Cry in the ears of Jerusalem'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.' Hebrews 3:12.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies*, volume 5, pages 454-456.

LESSON AIM: To show the danger in rejecting the Word of the Lord to us today.

Introduction

The Lord God is a jealous God; yet He bears long with the sins and transgressions of His people in this generation. If the people of God had walked in His counsel, the work of God would have advanced, the messages of truth would have been borne to all people that dwell on the face of the whole earth. . . . But because the people are disobedient, unthankful, unholy, as were ancient Israel, time is prolonged that all may hear the last message of mercy proclaimed with a loud voice. The Lord's work has been hindered, the sealing time delayed. Many have not heard the truth. But the Lord will give them a chance to hear and be converted. What are you doing in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world are receiving the

worldly mould and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth, these are receiving the heavenly mould and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity. Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God, candidates for heaven. Every individual soul, if he would receive the seal of the living God, must hear the Word of the Lord, and do it with exactitude. There must be no such thing as haphazard religion if men would have a place in the family of God. Now is the time, while the four angels are holding the four winds, to make our calling and election sure.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 288.

'I will betroth thee unto me'

1. How does God remember his relationship with His people when he first took them for His own? Jeremiah 2:1-2.

NOTE: 'In the Bible the sacred and enduring character of the relation that exists between Christ and His church is represented by the union of marriage. The Lord has joined His people to Himself by a solemn covenant, He promising to be their God, and they pledging themselves to be His, and His alone. He declares, "I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies." [Hosea 2:19.] And again, "I am married unto you." [Jeremiah 3:14.] And Paul employs the same figure in the New Testament, when he says, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." [2 Corinthians 11:2.] The unfaithfulness of the church to Christ in permitting her confidence and affection to be turned from Him, and allowing the love of worldly things to occupy the soul, is likened to the violation of the marriage vow. The sin of Israel in departing from the Lord is presented under this figure; and the wonderful love of God which they thus despised is touchingly portrayed. "I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest Mine." "And thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty; for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee. . . . But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown." "As a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord;" "as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband." [Ezekiel 16:8, 13-15, 32; Jeremiah 3:20.]' *Great Controversy*, page 381.

2. Which image does God take from nature to describe the setting up of the chosen nation? Jeremiah 2:21, first part.

NOTE: 'Shall the vines of Sodom and Gomorrah be permitted to grow in the garden of the Lord? Will the terrible judgments of God be visited upon those who know the truth because they have not formed characters after the divine example? Will God be obliged to say of His people today, as He said of Israel: "I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine?" Let us subdue self. Let us overcome every evil trait of character. Then the graces of the Lord will once more grow on the once flourishing vine, which will no longer bear the grapes of Sodom and the clusters of Gomorrah.' *Manuscript Releases, volume 3*, page 359.

'The founder melteth in vain'

3. How does God describe what they had turned into? Jeremiah 2:21, last part; Jeremiah 3:20.

NOTE: 'There has been a departure from God among us, and the zealous work of repentance and return to our first love, essential to restoration to God and regeneration of heart, has not yet been done. Infidelity has been making its inroads into our ranks; for it is the fashion to depart from Christ, and give place to scepticism. With many the cry of the heart has been, "We will not have this man to reign over us." Baal, Baal, is the choice. The religion of many among us will be the religion of apostate Israel, because they love their own way, and forsake the way of the Lord. The true religion, the only religion of the Bible, that teaches forgiveness only through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, that advocates righteousness by the faith of the Son of God, has been slighted, spoken against, ridiculed, and rejected. It has been denounced as leading to enthusiasm and fanaticism. But it is the life of Jesus Christ in the soul; it is the active principle of love imparted by the Holy Spirit, that alone will make the soul fruitful unto good works. Through Jeremiah the word of the Lord to His people was: "Return, thou backsliding Israel, . . . and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. . . . Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you." "Thou shalt call Me, My Father; and shalt not turn away from Me." "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." Jeremiah 3:12-14, 19, 22.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 410.

4. When the surrounding nations saw their rejection by God, how would men describe the rebellious house? Jeremiah 6:28-30.

NOTE: 'As a wise master builder, Jeremiah at the very beginning of his lifework sought to encourage the men of Judah to lay the foundations of their spiritual life broad and deep, by making thorough work of repentance. Long had they been building with material likened by the apostle Paul to wood, hay, and stubble, and by Jeremiah himself to dross. "Refuse silver shall men call them," he declared of the impenitent nation, "because the Lord hath rejected them." Jeremiah 6:30, margin. Now they were urged to begin building wisely and for eternity, casting aside the rubbish of apostasy and unbelief, and using as foundation material the pure gold, the refined silver, the precious stones, faith and obedience and good works, which alone are acceptable in the sight of a holy God.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 409.

'If thou wilt return'

5. With what words did God plead with them to repent? Jeremiah 7:3-6, 8-9.

NOTE: “Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever.” Jeremiah 7:2-7. The unwillingness of the Lord to chastise is here vividly shown. He stays His judgments that He may plead with the impenitent. He who exercises “loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth” yearns over His erring children; in every way possible He seeks to teach them the way of life everlasting. Jeremiah 9:24. He had brought the Israelites out of bondage that they might serve Him, the only true and living God. Though they had wandered long in idolatry and had slighted His warnings, yet He now declares His willingness to defer chastisement and grant yet another opportunity for repentance. He makes plain the fact that only by the most thorough heart reformation could the impending doom be averted. In vain would be the trust they might place in the temple and its services. Rites and ceremonies could not atone for sin. Notwithstanding their claim to be the chosen people of God, reformation of heart and of the life practice alone could save them from the inevitable result of continued transgression.’ *Prophets & Kings*, page 413.

6. What promise was given to them if they chose to turn to God in heart and life once again? Jeremiah 7:3, 7; Jeremiah 4:1.

NOTE: ‘But Jeremiah stood boldly before the princes and the people, declaring: “The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God; and the Lord will repent Him of the evil that He hath pronounced against you.”’ *Prophets & Kings*, page 417.

‘We will not walk therein’

7. What message did Jeremiah the prophet bring to Judah from God? Jeremiah 6:16-17.

NOTE: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. . . . But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” [Psalm 1:1-3.] It is only as the law of God is restored to its rightful position that there can be a revival of primitive faith and godliness among his professed people. “Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” [Jeremiah 6:16.]’ *Great Controversy*, page 478.

8. How blatant was their negative response to God? Jeremiah 6:16-17.

NOTE: ‘A sin-hating God calls upon those who claim to keep His law to depart from all iniquity. A neglect to repent and to render willing obedience will bring upon men and women today as serious consequences as came upon ancient Israel. There is a limit beyond which the judgments of Jehovah can no longer be delayed. The desolation of Jerusalem in the days of Jeremiah is a solemn warning to modern Israel, that the counsels and admonitions given them through chosen instrumentalities cannot be disregarded with impunity.’ *Prophets & Kings*, page 416.

‘Daily rising up early’

9. How did God describe his consistent pleading with Judah? Jeremiah 7:25.

NOTE: ‘Why did God send them so many messages and warnings? Because He knew that the enemy was wide awake, and active in his efforts to deceive men, and to lead them away from the law of God into his deceptions. Satan ever seeks to cause men to swerve from their obedience to God.’ *Manuscript Releases, volume 1*, page 108.

10. How did God’s people respond to the prophetic messengers? Jeremiah 7:26 Jeremiah 8:5-7.

NOTE: ‘Israel’s experience from the days of the Exodus was briefly reviewed. God’s covenant with them had been, “Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.” Shamelessly and repeatedly had this covenant been broken. The chosen nation had “walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.” Jeremiah 7:23, 24. “Why,” the Lord inquired, “is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding?” Jeremiah 8:5. In the language of the prophet it was because they had obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God and had refused to be corrected. See Jeremiah 5:3. “Truth is perished,” he mourned, “and is cut off from their mouth.” “The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My people know not the judgment of the Lord.” “Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord: shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?” Jeremiah 7:28; 8:7; Jeremiah 9:9.’ *Prophets & Kings*, page 414.

‘Run ye to and fro through the streets’

11. For how many would God have turned back their captivity? Jeremiah 5:1.

NOTE: ‘We are told that Abraham drew near and said: “Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?” While Abra-

ham had a true sense of humility that every child of God should possess, yet he had an intense interest in the souls of sinners. He is represented as drawing near. He steps close to those heavenly messengers and pleads with them as a child would plead with its parents. He remembers that Lot has made his home in Sodom and that Lot has connections all through Sodom by marriage. Therefore Abraham commences at fifty, and the Lord tells him that He will spare it for fifty; then he goes down to ten, and the Lord tells him that He will spare it for ten's sake. He does not make any further appeal, but he does hope that there will be found ten righteous [persons] in Sodom. But when the angels came to Sodom, they could not find even five righteous ones in that splendid city." The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Psalm 14:2, 3.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 75.

12. How did Jeremiah express his sorrow that there was not one in the city of Jerusalem that would turn to God and avert the coming captivity? Jeremiah 8:20-9:2.

NOTE: 'Let church members bear in mind that the fact that their names are registered on the church books will not save them. They must show themselves approved of God, workmen that need not be ashamed. Day by day they are to build their characters in accordance with Christ's directions. They are to abide in Him, constantly exercising faith in Him. Thus they will grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ, wholesome, cheerful, grateful Christians, led by God into clearer and still clearer light. If this is not their experience, they will be among those whose voices will one day be raised in the bitter lamentation: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my soul is not saved! Why did I not flee to the Stronghold for refuge? Why have I trifled with my soul's salvation, and done despite to the Spirit of grace?"' *Counsels for the Church*, page 67.

'Peter kept alive in his heart the hope of Christ's return, and he assured the church of the certain fulfilment of the Saviour's promise, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." John 14:3. To the tried and faithful ones the coming might seem long delayed, but the apostle assured them: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 536.

Lesson 5: April 29-May 5 'Watchmen on the walls of Zion'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.' 1 Timothy 3:4-5.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 375-390.

LESSON AIM: To discern and understand the parallels between Judah, the Lord's chosen people, and the danger in which we stand today.

Introduction

'But by the great mass of the people the call to repentance and reformation was unheeded. Since the death of good King Josiah, those who ruled the nation had been proving untrue to their trust and had been leading many astray. Jehoahaz, deposed by the interference of the king of Egypt, had been followed by Jehoiakim, an older son of Josiah. From the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, Jeremiah had little hope of saving his beloved land from destruction and the people from captivity. Yet he was not permitted to remain silent while utter ruin threatened the kingdom. Those who had remained loyal to God must be encouraged to persevere in right-doing, and sinners must, if possible, be induced to turn from iniquity. The crisis demanded a public and far-reaching effort. Jeremiah was commanded by the Lord to stand in the court of the temple and speak to all the people of Judah who might pass in and out. From the messages given him he must diminish not a word, that sinners in Zion might have the fullest possible opportunity to hearken and to turn from their evil ways. The prophet obeyed; he stood in the gate of the Lord's house and there lifted his voice in warning and entreaty.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 412.

'Rising early and speaking'

1. During Judah's last forty in the Promised Land, how did God communicate with His people? Jeremiah 7:25. 2 Chronicles 36:14-16

NOTE: 'The Lord, in His great mercy, does not bring judgments upon the earth without giving warning to its inhabitants by the mouth of His servants. Says the prophet Amos, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." [Amos 3:7.] The Lord gave Jeremiah a message of reproof to bear to His people, charging them with the continual rejection of God's counsel: "I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto Me. I

have sent also unto you all My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers." God pleaded with them not to provoke Him to anger with the work of their hands and their hearts, "but they hearkened not." *Testimonies, volume 4, page 164.*

2. Which prophets are known by name? 2 Chronicles 36:11.12; Jeremiah 26:20

NOTE: 'We must cherish and cultivate the faith of which prophets and apostles have testified, the faith that lays hold on the promises of God and waits for deliverance in His appointed time and way. The sure word of prophecy will meet its final fulfilment in the glorious advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords. With the prophet who endeavoured to encourage Judah in a time of unparalleled apostasy, let us confidently declare, "The Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him." Let us ever hold in remembrance the cheering message, "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come.'" *Conflict & Courage, page 242.*

'For reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness'

3. How did God describe the purpose of the prophets that He sent to them? Jeremiah 6:17; Jeremiah 6:27, 29.

NOTE: 'The true workers of Jesus Christ are to co-operate with their brethren who have had an experience in the work from the very rise of the third angel's message. These followed on step by step, receiving light and truth as they advanced, bearing one test after another, lifting the cross that lay directly in their pathway, and pressing on to know the Lord, whose goings forth are prepared as the morning. You and other of our brethren must accept the truth as God has given it to His students of prophecy, as they have been led by genuine, living experience, advancing point by point, tested, proved, and tried, until the truth is to them a reality. From their voices and pens the truth in bright, warm rays has gone to all parts of the world, and that which was to them testing truth, as brought by the Lord's delegated messengers, is testing truth to all to whom this message is proclaimed. The burden of the warning now to come to the people of God, nigh and afar off, is the third angel's message. And those who are seeking to understand this message will not be led by the Lord to make an application of the Word that will undermine the foundation and remove the pillars of the faith that has made Seventh-day Adventists what they are today. The truths that have been unfolding in their order, as we have advanced along the line of prophecy revealed in the Word of God, are truth, sacred, eternal truth today. Those who passed over the ground step by step in the past history of our experience, seeing the chain of truth in the prophecies, were prepared to accept and obey every ray of light. They were praying, fasting, searching, digging for the truth as for hidden treasures, and the Holy Spirit, we know, was teaching and guiding us. Many theories were advanced, bearing a semblance of truth, but so mingled with misinterpreted and misapplied scriptures, that they led to dangerous errors. Very well do we know how every point of truth was established, and the seal set upon it by the Holy Spirit of God. And all the time voices were heard, "Here is the truth," "I have the truth; follow me." But the warnings came, "Go not ye after them. I have not sent them, but they ran." (See Jeremiah 23:21.)' *Selected Messages, book 2, pages 102-103.*

4. For what further divine purpose does God send prophets to His people? Jeremiah 6:8; Jeremiah 5:3

NOTE: 'We call upon you to take your stand on the Lord's side, and act your part as a loyal subject of the kingdom. Acknowledge the gift that has been placed in the church for the guidance of God's people in the closing days of earth's history. From the beginning the church of God has had the gift of prophecy in her midst as a living voice to counsel, admonish, and instruct.' *Selected Messages, book 3, page 83.*

'For half a century I have been the Lord's messenger, and as long as my life shall last I shall continue to bear the messages that God gives me for His people. I take no glory to myself; in my youth the Lord made me His messenger, to communicate to His people testimonies of encouragement, warning, and reproof. For sixty years I have been in communication with heavenly messengers, and I have been constantly learning in reference to divine things, and in reference to the way in which God is constantly working to bring souls from the error of their ways to the light in God's light. Many souls have been helped because they have believed that the messages given me were sent in mercy to the erring. When I have seen those who needed a different phase of Christian experience, I have told them so, for their present and eternal good. And so long as the Lord spares my life, I will do my work faithfully, whether or not men and women shall hear and receive and obey. My work is clearly given me to do, and I shall receive grace in being obedient. I love God. I love Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and I feel an intense interest in every soul who claims to be a child of God. I am determined to be a faithful steward so long as the Lord shall spare my life. I will not fail nor be discouraged. I love the Lord; I love my Saviour, and my life is wholly in the hands of God. As long as He sustains me, I shall bear a decided testimony.' *Manuscript Releases, volume 5, pages 152-153.*

'Return unto Me'

5. What appeal did God make to Judah through His prophet Jeremiah? Jeremiah 4:1 (first part)

NOTE: 'Have you, reader, chosen your own way? Have you wandered far from God? Have you sought to feast upon the fruits of transgression, only to find them turn to ashes upon your lips? And now, your substance spent, your life-plans thwarted, and your hopes dead, do you sit alone and desolate? Now that voice which has long been speaking to your heart but to which you would not listen comes to you distinct and clear, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest; because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction." Micah 2:10. Return to your Father's house. He invites you, saying, "Return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah 44:22. Do not listen to the enemy's suggestion to stay away from Christ until you have made yourself better; until you are good enough to come to God. If you wait until then, you will never come. When Satan points to your filthy garments, repeat the promise of Jesus, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. Tell

the enemy that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. Make the prayer of David your own, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalm 51:7. Arise and go to your Father. He will meet you a great way off. If you take even one step toward Him in repentance, He will hasten to enfold you in His arms of infinite love. His ear is open to the cry of the contrite soul. The very first reaching out of the heart after God is known to Him. Never a prayer is offered, however faltering, never a tear is shed, however secret, never a sincere desire after God is cherished, however feeble, but the Spirit of God goes forth to meet it.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 205-206.

6. What would be the evidence that they had returned to the Lord? Jeremiah 4:1, last part.

NOTE: 'On one occasion, by command of the Lord, the prophet took his position at one of the principal entrances to the city and there urged the importance of keeping holy the Sabbath day. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were in danger of losing sight of the sanctity of the Sabbath, and they were solemnly warned against following their secular pursuits on that day. A blessing was promised on condition of obedience. "If ye diligently hearken unto Me," the Lord declared, and "hallow the Sabbath day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain forever." Jeremiah 17:24, 25. This promise of prosperity as the reward of allegiance was accompanied by a prophecy of the terrible judgments that would befall the city should its inhabitants prove disloyal to God and His law. If the admonitions to obey the Lord God of their fathers and to hallow His Sabbath day were not heeded, the city and its palaces would be utterly destroyed by fire.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 411.

'Broken cisterns that can hold no water'

7. What were the two evils of the house of Judah? Jeremiah 2:13

NOTE: 'Men who turn away from the knowledge of God, have placed their minds under the control of their master, Satan, and he trains them to be his servants. The less the productions expressing infidel views are brought before the youth, the better. Evil angels are ever on the alert that they may exalt before the minds of the youth that which will do them injury; and as books expressing infidel and pagan sentiments are read, these unseen agents of evil seek to impress those who study them with the spirit of questioning and unbelief. Those who drink from these polluted channels do not thirst for the waters of life; for they are satisfied with the broken cisterns of the world. They think they have the treasures of knowledge, when they are hoarding that which is but wood and hay and stubble, not worth gaining, not worth keeping. Their self-esteem, their idea that a superficial knowledge of things constitutes education, make them boastful and self-satisfied, when they are, as were the Pharisees, ignorant of the Scriptures and the power of God.' *Christian Education*, page 100.

'It is by beholding that we become changed. And as those sacred precepts in which God has opened to men the perfection and holiness of His character are neglected, and the minds of the people are attracted to human teachings and theories, what marvel that there has followed a decline of living piety in the church. Saith the Lord, "They have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." [Jeremiah 2:3.]' *Great Controversy*, page 478.

8. How does God through Jeremiah explain the root cause of those two evils? Jeremiah 3:13

NOTE: 'In the whole Satanic force there is not power to overcome one soul who in simple trust casts himself on Christ. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." Isaiah 40:29. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The Lord says, "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God." "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you." 1 John 1:9; Jeremiah 3:13; Ezekiel 36:25. But we must have a knowledge of ourselves, a knowledge that will result in contrition, before we can find pardon and peace. The Pharisee felt no conviction of sin. The Holy Spirit could not work with him. His soul was encased in a self-righteous armour which the arrows of God, barbed and true-aimed by angel hands, failed to penetrate. It is only he who knows himself to be a sinner that Christ can save. He came "to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. But "they that are whole need not a physician." Luke 5:31. We must know our real condition, or we shall not feel our need of Christ's help. We must understand our danger, or we shall not flee to the refuge.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 157-158.

'God's Message to Judah'

9. In the face of the coming captivity how did God plead with them? Jeremiah 4:1, 3-4. Jeremiah 4:14.

NOTE: 'Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation. There must be decided changes in the life; everything offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin. The work that we have to do on our part is plainly set before us: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." Isaiah 1:16, 17. "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die." Ezekiel 33:15. Paul says, speaking of the work of repentance: "Ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." 2 Corinthians 7:11. When sin has deadened the moral perceptions, the wrongdoer does not discern the defects of his character nor realise the enormity of the evil he has committed; and unless he yields to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit he remains in partial blindness to his sin. His confessions are not sincere and in earnest. To every acknowledgment of his guilt he adds an apology in excuse of his course, declaring that if it had not been for certain circumstances he would not have done this

or that for which he is reproved.’ *Steps to Christ*, pages 39-40.

10. How does God show that these appeals are for His glory as well as Judah’s good? Jeremiah 4:2.

NOTE: The yoke that binds to service is the law of God. The great law of love revealed in Eden, proclaimed upon Sinai, and in the new covenant written in the heart, is that which binds the human worker to the will of God. If we were left to follow our own inclinations, to go just where our will would lead us, we should fall into Satan’s ranks and become possessors of his attributes. Therefore God confines us to His will, which is high, and noble, and elevating. He desires that we shall patiently and wisely take up the duties of service. The yoke of service Christ Himself has borne in humanity. He said, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Psalm 40:8. “I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.” John 6:38. Love for God, zeal for His glory, and love for fallen humanity, brought Jesus to earth to suffer and to die. This was the controlling power of His life. This principle He bids us adopt.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 329.

‘I know thy works’

11. How does God see His chosen people today? Revelation 3:15-18.

NOTE: ‘Those who are reproved by the Spirit of God should not rise up against the humble instrument. It is God, and not an erring mortal, who has spoken to save them from ruin. It is not pleasing to human nature to receive reproof, nor is it possible for the heart of man, unenlightened by the Spirit of God, to realise the necessity of reproof or the blessing it is designed to bring. As man yields to temptation, and indulges in sin, his mind becomes darkened. The moral sense is perverted. The warnings of conscience are disregarded, and its voice is less clearly heard. He gradually loses the power to distinguish between right and wrong, until he has no true sense or his standing before God. He may observe the forms of religion and zealously maintain its doctrines, while destitute of its spirit. His condition is that described by the True Witness: “Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Revelation 3:17.’ *Counsels for the Church*, page 96.

12. What appeal does God make today through the prophet John to those facing the time of final judgment? Revelation 3:18-19.

NOTE: ‘The great Redeemer represents Himself as a heavenly merchantman, laden with riches, calling from house to house, presenting His priceless goods, and saying, “I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:18-20). Let us consider our condition before God; let us heed the counsel of the True Witness. Let none of us be filled with prejudice, as were the Jews, that light may not come into our hearts. Let it not be necessary for Christ to say of us as He did of them, “Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life” (John 5:40).’ *Faith & Works*, page 84.

Lesson 6: May 6-12

‘In vain do they worship Me’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice, and ye shall serve Him, and cleave unto Him.’ Deuteronomy 13:4.

STUDY HELP: *Christ Triumphant*, page 43.

SUDY AIM: To show that God abhors those practices, which appear as worship, when the heart is not wholly on the side of God.

Introduction

‘The substitution of the precepts of men for the commandments of God has not ceased. Even among Christians are found institutions and usages that have no better foundation than the traditions of the fathers. Such institutions, resting upon mere human authority, have supplanted those of divine appointment. Men cling to their traditions, and revere their customs, and cherish hatred against those who seek to show them their error. In this day, when we are bidden to call attention to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, we see the same enmity as was manifested in the days of Christ. Of the remnant of God it is written, “The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17. . . Let all who accept human authority, the customs of the church, or the traditions of the fathers, take heed to the warning conveyed in the words of Christ, “In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”’ *Desire of Ages*, page 398.

‘Cain brought of the fruit of the ground’

1. From whom did Adam and Eve receive clothing to cover the shame of their nakedness? Genesis 3:21.

NOTE: The Lord Jesus Christ has prepared a covering, the robe of His own righteousness, that He will put on every repenting, believing soul who by faith will receive it. Said John, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John

1:29). Sin is the transgression of the law. Christ died to make it possible for every man to have his sins taken away. A fig-leaf apron will never cover our nakedness. Sin must be taken away, and the garment of Christ's righteousness must cover the transgressor of God's law. Then when the Lord looks upon the believing sinner, He sees, not the fig leaves covering him, but Christ's own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. Man has hidden his nakedness, not under a covering of fig leaves, but under the robe of Christ's righteousness.' *The Upward Look*, page 378.

2. Why was God so displeased with the sacrifice that Cain brought before Him? Genesis 4:3-5.

NOTE: 'These two brothers erected their altars alike, and each brought an offering. Abel presented a sacrifice from the flock, in accordance with the Lord's directions. "And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Fire flashed from heaven and consumed the sacrifice. But Cain, disregarding the Lord's direct and explicit command, presented only an offering of fruit. There was no token from heaven to show that it was accepted. Abel grasped the great principles of redemption. He saw himself a sinner, and he saw sin and its penalty, death, standing between his soul and communion with God. He brought the slain victim, the sacrificed life, thus acknowledging the claims of the law that had been transgressed. Through the shed blood he looked to the future sacrifice, Christ dying on the cross of Calvary; and trusting in the atonement that was there to be made, he had the witness that he was righteous, and his offering accepted. Cain had the same opportunity of learning and accepting these truths as had Abel. He was not the victim of an arbitrary purpose. One brother was not elected to be accepted of God, and the other to be rejected. Abel chose faith and obedience; Cain, unbelief and rebellion. Here the whole matter rested.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 24.

'All the host of heaven whom they have loved'

3. In the time of Jeremiah how had this strong warning against perverted worship been forgotten? Jeremiah 7:17-18; Jeremiah 1:16; Jeremiah 8:2.

NOTE: 'Idolaters are condemned by the Word of God. Their folly consists in trusting in self for salvation, in bowing down to the works of their own hands. God classes as idolaters those who trust in their own wisdom, their own devising, depending for success on their riches and power, striving to strengthen themselves by alliance with men whom the world calls great, but who fail to discern the binding claims of His law. Are we worshipers of Jehovah, or of Baal? Of the living God, or of idols? No outward shrines may be visible; there may be no image for the eye to rest upon; yet we may be practising idolatry. It is as easy to make an idol of cherished ideas or objects as to fashion gods of wood or stone. Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 1*, page 1105.

4. In contrast to the impure worthless worship of those in Judah, how is the purity of the worship of the three Hebrews described by Nebuchadnezzar? Daniel 3:28.

NOTE: 'As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so in the closing period of earth's history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right. He who walked with the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain. In the midst of the time of trouble, trouble such as has not been since there was a nation, His chosen ones will stand unmoved. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and on their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a "God of gods," able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 513. 'In order to impress idolaters with the power and greatness of the living God, His servants must reveal their own reverence for God. They must make it manifest that He is the only object of their honour and worship, and that no consideration, not even the preservation of life itself, can induce them to make the least concession to idolatry. These lessons have a direct and vital bearing upon our experience in these last days.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 149.

'That swear by the Lord and swear by Malcham'

5. What were some of the abominations being carried out in the name of worship? Jeremiah 7:31.

NOTE: 'It is Satan's constant effort to misrepresent the character of God, the nature of sin, and the real issues at stake in the great controversy. His sophistry lessens the obligation of the divine law, and gives men license to sin. At the same time he causes them to cherish false conceptions of God, so that they regard him with fear and hate, rather than with love. The cruelty inherent in his own character is attributed to the Creator; it is embodied in systems of religion, and expressed in modes of worship. Thus the minds of men are blinded, and Satan secures them as his agents to war against God. By perverted conceptions of the divine attributes, heathen nations were led to believe human sacrifices necessary to secure the favor of Deity; and horrible cruelties have been perpetrated under the various forms of idolatry.' *Great Controversy*, page 569.

6. While worshipping the Lord in the sanctuary what else were they worshipping on the housetops? Zephaniah 1:5.

NOTE: 'We are not to engage in an investigation of spiritualism. God has investigated this for us, and told us definitely that a class would arise in the last days who would deny Christ who has purchased them with His own blood. The character of spiritualists is so plainly described that we need not be deceived by them. If we obey the divine injunction we shall have no sympathy with spiritualists, however smooth and fair may be their words. In the Epistle of Paul to Timothy, he foretells what will be manifested in the latter days. And this warning was for the benefit of those who should live when these things should take place. God revealed to His servant the perils of the church in the last days. He writes, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." The faithful Peter speaks of the dangers to which the Christian

church would be exposed in the last days, and more fully describes the heresies which would arise and the blaspheming seducers who would seek to draw away souls after them. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." Here God has worked out for us the proof of the class mentioned. They have refused to acknowledge Christ as the Son of God, and they have no more reverence for the eternal Father than for His Son, Jesus Christ. They have neither the Son nor the Father. And like their great leader, the rebel chief, they are in rebellion against the law of God, and they despise the blood of Christ.' *Confrontation*, pages 91- 92.

'Burn incense unto Baal ... and stand before Me in this house'

7. What other specific examples of mixed worship that were taking place in Judah did God reveal to Jeremiah? Jeremiah 7:9-11.

NOTE: 'The world is not to be our criterion. We are not to associate with the ungodly and partake of their spirit, for they will lead the heart away from God to the worship of false gods. The steadfast soul, firm in the faith, can do much good; he can impart blessings of the highest order to those with whom he associates, for the law of the Lord is in his heart. But we cannot willingly associate with those who are trampling upon the law of God, and preserve our faith pure and untarnished. We shall catch the spirit, and unless we separate from them, we shall be bound up with them at last, to share their doom. It was by associating with idolaters and joining in their festivities that the Hebrews were led to transgress God's law and bring His judgments upon the nation. So now it is by leading the followers of Christ to associate with the ungodly and unite in their amusements that Satan is most successful in alluring them into sin. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean." God requires of His people now as great a distinction from the world, in customs, habits, and principles, as He required of Israel anciently.' *The Adventist Home*, pages 459-460.

8. In what way did Judah demean the tender love and blessing shown them by God? Jeremiah 2:27-29. Compare God's pleading with them. Jeremiah 3:19.

NOTE: 'From the instruction given us in the Old and New Testaments God desires us to learn that we are not to place ourselves, and those connected with us, in intimate connection with those who are corrupt in thought, word, and action. If workers of limited experience are placed in close connection with this class, there is danger that they will by beholding become changed into the same image, that the standard of holiness and truth will be lowered. There is danger that corruption will cease to appear in its vileness to those who are trying to bring about a reform, and that the truth will become confused with that which is common and low.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 49.

'Entire conformity to the will of our Father which is in heaven is alone sanctification, and the will of God is expressed in His holy law. The keeping of all the commandments of God is sanctification. Proving yourselves obedient children to God's Word is sanctification. The Word of God is to be our guide, not the opinions or ideas of men.' *Faith & Works*, page 121.

'Hath not turned unto Me with her whole heart but feignedly'

9. What sad fact did God observe concerning their period of revival under the reign of Josiah? Jeremiah 3:10. Compare God's commendation of the young King. 2 Kings 23:25

NOTE: 'God calls for intelligent Christians, for men and women who are filled with the knowledge of His will. He calls for men and women who by their good works show that the truth has brought about a change in their lives. The religion that consists in professions merely is but a pretence. Those whose union with Christ ends with the writing of their names on the church roll are not channels of light. God's servants should daily gain more knowledge of Him. Daily they should grow in grace and in spiritual understanding, strengthened with might according to His glorious power. They are to increase in spiritual efficiency, that they may give strength to those for whom they labour.' *Southern Watchman*, December 25, 1902.

'Many who profess to believe the truth for these last days, will be found wanting. They have neglected the weightier matters. Their conversion is superficial, not deep, earnest, and thorough. They do not know why they believe the truth, only because others have believed it, and they take it for granted that it is the truth. They can give no intelligent reason why they believe. Others are not enlightened or edified by their experience, or by the knowledge which it was their privilege and duty to obtain. Strength and stability are with truehearted professors.' *Christian Service*, page 45.

10. What did Jesus say about those who continued in the rituals of godly life and worship but did not obey and honour Him? Mark 7:7-9, Matthew 15:7-9.

NOTE: 'Jesus did not always silently look upon these worthless services, but sometimes told the people where they were going wrong. Because He was so quick to see what was false and what was true, His brethren were greatly annoyed at Him; for they said that whatever the priest taught ought to be considered as sacred as a command of God. But Jesus taught both by His words and by His example that men ought to worship God just as He has directed them to worship Him, and not follow the ceremonies that men have said ought to be followed. His brethren were greatly put out because Jesus would not do as the priests directed, but followed the word of God rather than the traditions of men.' *Youth's Instructor*, December 5, 1895.

'Truth is perished'

11. What is always the outcome of mixed worship? Jeremiah 7:28.

NOTE: 'The unsanctified heart will never incline itself to God. Joshua said to Israel: "Now therefore put away . . . the strange

gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel." "But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward. . . . But thou shalt say unto them, This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth." "But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear; but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction." God is full of mercy and goodness and truth. He forgives transgressions and sins. But if the human agent takes his case out of the hands of God, and wills to do as he pleases, irrespective of warning and reproof and counsel from the Spirit of God; if he refuses the light that is flashed athwart his pathway to reveal to him whither his feet are tending; if he chooses darkness rather than light that is of infinite value, and determinedly walks in darkness, he will come to look upon the light that is as an angel to guide him aright, as veritable darkness that is against his good; and how great is that darkness! *Youth's Instructor*, December 7, 1893.

"Why," the Lord inquired, "is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding?" Jeremiah 8:5. In the language of the prophet it was because they had obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God and had refused to be corrected. See Jeremiah 5:3. "Truth is perished," he mourned, "and is cut off from their mouth." *Prophets & Kings*, page 414.

12. How does it affect the life and dealings of the worshippers? Jeremiah 6:13.

NOTE: 'The law of God will be satisfied with nothing short of perfection, of perfect and entire obedience to all its claims. To come half way to its requirements, and not render perfect and thorough submission and obedience, will avail nothing. The worldling and the infidel admire consistency, and have ever been powerfully convicted that God was of a truth with His people, when their works correspond with their faith. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Every tree is known by his own fruits. Our words, our actions, are the fruit we bear. There are those who hear the sayings of Christ, but do them not. They profess, but their fruits are such as to disgust unbelievers. They are boastful, and pray and talk in a self-righteous manner, exalting themselves, and virtually thanking God, like the Pharisee, that they are not as other men. They recount their good deeds, yet these very ones are crafty, and overreach in business deal. Their fruits are not good. Their words and acts are wrong, and yet they seem to be blinded to their destitute, wretched condition. I was shown that the following scripture was applicable to such, who go along under such a deception. "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in Heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Here is the greatest deception that can affect the human mind, for persons to believe that they are right when they are wrong. They think that they are doing a great work in their religious life. Finally Jesus tears off their self-righteous covering, and vividly presents before them the true picture of themselves, in all their wrongs and deformity of religious character. They are found wanting when it is forever too late to have their wants supplied.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, pages 416-417.

13. How complete is the love and loyalty that God always has always looked for in His people? 1 Chronicles 28:9; Luke 10:25-28; Deuteronomy 13:4; Revelation 14:12.

NOTE: 'It is a sacred work in which we are engaged. The apostle Paul exhorts his brethren: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." It is a sacred duty that we owe to God to keep the spirit pure, as a temple for the Holy Ghost. If the heart and mind are devoted to the service of God, obeying all His commandments, loving Him with all the heart, might, mind, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves, we shall be found loyal and true to the requirements of heaven.' *Testimonies, volume 4*, page 33.

'We are now in God's workshop. Many of us are rough stones from the quarry. But as we lay hold upon the truth of God, its influence affects us. It elevates us and removes from us every imperfection and sin, of whatever nature. Thus we are prepared to see the King in His beauty and finally to unite with the pure and heavenly angels in the kingdom of glory. It is here that this work is to be accomplished for us, here that our bodies and spirits are to be fitted for immortality.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 355.

Lesson 7: May 13-19 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!'

MEMORY VERSE: 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!' Matthew 23:37

STUDY HELP: *God's Amazing Grace*, page 79.

LESSON AIM: To understand the hurt of God our Father as His children reject His appeals of mercy.

Introduction

In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the *Testimonies* of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now . . . Warnings and reproofs are not given to the erring among Seventh-day Adventists . . . but because they have great light, and have by their

profession taken their position as God's special, chosen people, having the law of God written in their hearts. They signify their loyalty to the God of heaven by yielding obedience to the laws of His government. They are God's representatives upon the earth.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 661.

'Thou that killest the prophets'

1. Why did God place Jeremiah the prophet among the people of Judah? Jeremiah 6:27.

NOTE: 'God designs to test the faith of all who claim to be followers of Christ. He will test the sincerity of the prayers of all those who claim to earnestly desire to know their duty. He will make duty plain. He will give all an ample opportunity to develop what is in their hearts. The Lord reproves and corrects the people who profess to keep His law. He points out their sins and lays open their iniquity because He wishes to separate all sin and wickedness from them, that they may perfect holiness in His fear. God rebukes, reproves, and corrects them, that they may be refined, sanctified, elevated, and finally exalted to His own throne.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 91.

2. How did the children of Israel continually treat the prophets that God sent to them? Jeremiah 7:25, 26; Matthew 23:37; 1 Kings 19:14.

NOTE: 'But Christ's great heart of love still pleaded for Jerusalem, that had scorned His mercies, despised His warnings, and was about to imbrue [moisten] her hands in His blood. If Jerusalem would but repent, it was not yet too late. While the last rays of the setting sun were lingering on temple, tower, and pinnacle, would not some good angel lead her to the Saviour's love, and avert her doom? Beautiful and unholy city, that had stoned the prophets, that had rejected the Son of God, that was locking herself by her impenitence in fetters of bondage, her day of mercy was almost spent!' *Desire of Ages*, page 577.

'They received no correction'

3. What was it that Judah refused to receive from the mouth of the prophets? Jeremiah 2:30.

NOTE: 'The Jews pursued their course of rejecting Christ until, in their self-deceived, deluded state, they thought that in crucifying him they were doing God a service. Thus it will be with all who resist the entreaties of the Spirit of God, and persist in doing what they know to be wrong. The Spirit once resisted, there will be less difficulty in resisting it a second time. If we maintain the independence of the natural heart, and refuse the correction of God, we shall, as did the Jews, stubbornly carry out our own purposes and ideas in the face of the plainest evidence, and shall be in danger of as great deception as came on them. In our blind infatuation we may go to as great lengths as they did, and yet flatter ourselves that we are doing work for God. Those who continue in this course will reap what they have sown. They were afforded a shelter, but they refused it. The plagues of God will fall, and he will prevent them not.' *Review & Herald*, July 27, 1897.

4. How did God warn Jeremiah that his words would not be heeded, any more than those of earlier prophets that God had sent them? Jeremiah 1:19, first part.

NOTE: 'His judgements came upon the two largest of our institutions. [Review & Herald Publishing House, Battle Creek Sanitarium, 1902.] Before all the world His displeasure was shown by stern judgments. And yet there are those who, since these terrible experiences, have refused correction and have followed a course of determined obstinacy. Some seem determined to continue doing those things that brought the expression of the displeasure of God upon those who would not heed admonition and warnings. They have kept up a continual defiance against God, and warfare against the testimonies of reproof that He has sent.' *Special Testimonies, series B, number 7*, page 11.

5. Which prophet lost his life for giving God's warning to Jerusalem? Jeremiah 26:20-23.

NOTE: 'God would have been with Ahab if he had walked in the counsel of heaven. But Ahab did not do this. He married a woman given to idolatry. Jezebel had more power over the king than God had. She led him into idolatry, and with him the people. God sent Elijah to Israel with messages of warning, but neither king nor people would heed his words. They looked upon him as a messenger of evil. At last God sent a drought upon the land. Did the people discern and acknowledge the object of this judgment and humble their hearts before Him? No; Jezebel said that the prophets of Jehovah had brought this calamity upon them. She said that all Israel was suffering because of their reproofs, and that there would be no rest or prosperity in the land until these prophets were put to death. Thus a feeling of anger was aroused against the men whom God had sent to entreat the people to repent of their wickedness. Many holy men died for their testimony. Elijah was preserved by a miracle of divine power, to proclaim before the king and queen the warnings and threatenings of God.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 162.

'Take with you words'

6. What plea did God make to His rebellious people? Jeremiah 3:13.

NOTE: 'The worldling may pronounce this sorrow a weakness; but it is the strength which binds the penitent to the Infinite One with links that cannot be broken. It shows that the angels of God are bringing back to the soul the graces that were lost through hardness of heart and transgression. The tears of the penitent are only the raindrops that precede the sunshine of holiness. This sorrow heralds a joy which will be a living fountain in the soul. "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God;" "and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 3:13, 12.' *Desire of Ages*, page 300.

7. With what words could Judah have shown their contrition? Jeremiah 10:23, 24.

NOTE: 'There is danger now of our losing sight of the important truths applicable for this period of time and seeking for those things that are new and strange and entrancing. Many, if reproved by the Spirit of God through His appointed agencies, refuse to receive correction, and a root of bitterness is planted in their hearts against the Lord's servants who carry heavy, disagreeable burdens. They have not the moral courage to do the things that it is for their special benefit to do. They see no necessity for reform, and so they reject the words of the Lord and hate Him who reproveth at the gate. This very refusal to heed the admonitions that the Lord sends gives Satan every advantage to make them the bitterest enemies of those who have told them the truth.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 361.

'Neither said they'

8. How did they reveal that they had forgotten the leading of God in their past history? Jeremiah 2:6, 8.

NOTE: 'In reviewing our past history, having travelled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.' *Last Day Events*, page 72.

'The history of ancient Israel is a striking illustration of the past experience of the Adventist body. God led His people in the Advent Movement, even as He led the children of Israel from Egypt. In the great disappointment their faith was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Had they still trusted to the guiding hand that had been with them in their past experience, they would have seen the salvation of God. If all who had laboured unitedly in the work in 1844 had received the third angel's message and proclaimed it in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts. A flood of light would have been shed upon the world. Years ago the inhabitants of the earth would have been warned, the closing work completed, and Christ would have come for the redemption of His people.' *Great Controversy*, page 457.

9. What words would God have been pleased to hear from His people concerning His loving guidance? Jeremiah 3:4.

NOTE: 'In order to strengthen our confidence in God, Christ teaches us to address Him by a new name, a name entwined with the dearest associations of the human heart. He gives us the privilege of calling the infinite God our Father. This name, spoken to Him and of Him, is a sign of our love and trust toward Him, and a pledge of His regard and relationship to us. Spoken when asking His favour or blessing, it is as music in His ears. That we might not think it presumption to call Him by this name, He has repeated it again and again. He desires us to become familiar with the appellation. God regards us as His children. He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 141-142.

'I am merciful'

10. With what loving encouragement did God plead with them to return to Him? Jeremiah 3:12.

NOTE: 'The part we have to act is to return to the Lord by confessing our sins to Him and to one another. A broken and contrite heart He will not despise; but our self-righteousness is in His sight as filthy rags. With many, self is whole; but when they fall upon the Rock, and are broken, then the arms of Jesus will encircle them, and draw them close to His great heart of love. God will not do for us that which we can do for ourselves; but He has said, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." And when we comply with the conditions, He will fulfil His word.' *Review & Herald*, May 20, 1884.

11. If the children of Israel had returned to God, what would He have done for them? Jeremiah 3:22, Hosea 14:4-6.

NOTE: 'Through Jeremiah the word of the Lord to His people was: "Return, thou backsliding Israel, . . . and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. . . . Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you." "Thou shalt call Me, my Father; and shalt not turn away from Me." "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." Jeremiah 3:12-14, 19, 22. And in addition to these wonderful pleadings, the Lord gave His erring people the very words with which they might turn to Him. They were to say: "Behold, we come unto Thee; for Thou art the Lord our God. Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel. . . . We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: for we have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God." Verses 22-25.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 410.

'Be zealous therefore, and repent'

12. Even in their declarations of faith, however, what hypocrisy did God see? Jeremiah 5:2-3.

NOTE: 'Will the churches heed the Laodicean message? Will they repent, or will they, notwithstanding that the most solemn message of truth, the third angel's message, is being proclaimed to the world, go on in sin? This is the last message of mercy, the last warning to a fallen world. If the church of God becomes lukewarm, it does not stand in favour with God any more than do the churches that are represented as having fallen and become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Those who have had opportunities to hear and receive the truth and who have united with the Seventh-day Adventist church, calling themselves the commandment-keeping people of God, and yet possess

no more vitality and consecration to God than do the nominal churches, will receive of the plagues of God just as verily as the churches who oppose the law of God. Only those that are sanctified through the truth will compose the royal family in the heavenly mansions Christ has gone to prepare for those that love Him and keep His commandments. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" [1 John 2:4]. This includes all who claim to have a knowledge of God, and to keep His commandments, but who do not manifest this by good works.' *Manuscript Releases, volume 19*, page 176.

13. What actions would have shown God that their words were from the heart and made it possible for them to remain in the Promised Land? Jeremiah 4:1, 3, 4, 14. Compare Jeremiah 6:10.

NOTE: 'The garden of the heart must be cultivated. The soil must be broken up by deep repentance for sin. Poisonous, satanic plants must be uprooted. The soil once overgrown by thorns can be reclaimed only by diligent labour. So the evil tendencies of the natural heart can be overcome only by earnest effort in the name and strength of Jesus. The Lord bids us by His prophet, "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns." "Sow to yourselves in righteousness; reap in mercy." Jeremiah 4:3; Hosea 10:12. This work He desires to accomplish for us, and He asks us to co-operate with Him.' *A Call to Stand Apart*, page 23.

Lesson 8: May 20-26 **'Mine affliction and my misery'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.' Matthew 5:11-12.

STUDY HELP: *Our High Calling*, page 353.

LESSON AIM: To show that strong opposition will come, but that God's people should commit themselves to Him both to uphold them and to avenge their sufferings.

Introduction

'The plainest evidences of the truth and purity of the character of him whom they wish to defame, are misconstrued. The most positive assurances of his faithfulness and nobility have no weight or power to control their slanderous reports. The most innocent works of conscience and charity are looked upon as actuated by selfish motives and unholy desires. The only safety for him who is thus assailed is to trust fully in God, not seeking to vindicate his own cause, but when falsely accused to his face to state only the plain facts of the case, and then leave the result with God. The Judge of all the earth will do right. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."' *Signs of the Times*, October 5, 1888.

'For I am with thee'

1. What had God promised to the timid young Jeremiah? Jeremiah 1:8, 18-19; Jeremiah 15:20-21.

NOTE: 'From the day of his call to the close of his ministry, Jeremiah stood before Judah as "a tower and a fortress" against which the wrath of man could not prevail. "They shall fight against thee," the Lord had forewarned His servant, "but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the Lord. And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible." Jeremiah 6:27; 15:20, 21.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 419.

2. How did God warn that Judah would respond to the divine words of warning? Jeremiah 7:27.

NOTE: 'When men's hearts are softened and subdued by the constraining influence of the Holy Spirit, they will give heed to counsel; but when they turn from admonition until their hearts become hardened, the Lord permits them to be led by other influences. Refusing the truth, they accept falsehood, which becomes a snare to their own destruction. God had pleaded with Judah not to provoke Him to anger, but they had hearkened not. Finally sentence was pronounced against them. They were to be led away captive to Babylon. The Chaldeans were to be used as the instrument by which God would chastise His disobedient people. The sufferings of the men of Judah were to be in proportion to the light they had had and to the warnings they had despised and rejected.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 425.

'Vengeance is mine'

3. What was the reaction of the priests of Anathoth, Jeremiah's home town, to his messages from the Lord? Jeremiah 11:18-19; Lamentations 3:14.

NOTE: 'Cruel were the mockings he was called upon to endure. His sensitive soul was pierced through and through by the arrows of derision hurled at him by those who despised his messages and made light of his burden for their conversion. "I was a derision to all my people," he declared, "and their song all the day." "I am in derision daily, everyone mocketh me." "All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him." Lamentations 3:14; Jeremiah 20:7, 10.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 420.

4. How did the people of Jerusalem respond to Jeremiah the messenger of God? Jeremiah 18:18; Lamentations 3:60-63.

NOTE: 'Had not the Promised One, through Isaiah, prophesied of Himself, "I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting"?' Isaiah 50:6. Through the psalmist Christ had foretold the treatment that He should receive from men: "I am . . . a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 225.

5. To whom did Jeremiah look for justice and protection in his distress? Jeremiah 11:20-23; Lamentations 3:31-33.

NOTE: 'The character of the judge in the parable, who feared not God, nor regarded man, was presented by Christ to show the kind of judgment that was then being executed, and that would soon be witnessed at His trial. He desires His people in all time to realise how little dependence can be placed on earthly rulers or judges in the day of adversity. Often the elect people of God have to stand before men in official positions who do not make the word of God their guide and counsellor, but who follow their own unconsecrated, undisciplined impulses. In the parable of the unjust judge, Christ has shown what we should do. "Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him?" Christ, our example, did nothing to vindicate or deliver Himself. He committed His case to God. So His followers are not to accuse or condemn, or to resort to force in order to deliver themselves.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 171.

'O Lord, thou hast deceived me'

6. How did Pashur the Governor treat Jeremiah? Jeremiah 20:1-2.

NOTE: 'In all ages God's appointed witnesses have exposed themselves to reproach and persecution for the truth's sake. Joseph was maligned and persecuted because he preserved his virtue and integrity. David, the chosen messenger of God, was hunted like a beast of prey by his enemies. Daniel was cast into a den of lions because he was true to his allegiance to heaven . . . Stephen was stoned because he preached Christ and Him crucified. Paul was imprisoned, beaten with rods, stoned, and finally put to death because he was a faithful messenger for God to the Gentiles. And John was banished to the Isle of Patmos "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 575.

7. What strong reaction did this call forth from Jeremiah? Jeremiah 20:7-12.

NOTE: "From the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, Jeremiah had little hope of saving his beloved land from destruction and the people from captivity. Yet he was not permitted to remain silent while utter ruin threatened the kingdom. Those who had remained loyal to God must be encouraged to persevere in right-doing, and sinners must, if possible, be induced to turn from iniquity.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 412.

'Diminish not a word'

8. What counsel did God give to Jeremiah? Jeremiah 26:2-3.

NOTE: 'It was a great cross for me to relate to the erring what had been shown me concerning them. It caused me great distress to see others troubled or grieved. And when obliged to declare the messages, I would often soften them down, and make them appear as favourable for the individual as I could, and then would go by myself and weep in agony of spirit . . . I did not realise that I was unfaithful in thus questioning and doubting, and did not see the danger and sin of such a course, until in vision I was taken into the presence of Jesus. He looked upon me with a frown, and turned His face from me.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, pages 73-74.

9. How was Jeremiah's life preserved? Jeremiah 26:24.

NOTE: 'Christ expressed His desire for human sympathy, and then withdrawing Himself from them about a stone's cast, He fell on His face and prayed, saying, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done." The superhuman agony with which He had been wrestling had brought Him to His disciples, longing for human companionship. But He was disappointed; they did not bring to Him the help He expected from them.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 266.

'In prison in the house of Jonathan'

10. Having been beaten when he tried to leave Jerusalem, in what fearful place was Jeremiah imprisoned by the princes? Jeremiah 37:11-16; Jeremiah 37:15; Lamentations 3:4.

NOTE: 'But the faithful prophet was daily strengthened to endure. "The Lord is with me as a mighty terrible One," he declared in faith; "therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be really ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten." "Sing unto the Lord, praise ye the Lord: for He hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers." Jeremiah 20:11, 13.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 420.

11. How did the weary, frightened humanity of Jeremiah reveal itself when he thought that Zedekiah might send him back to that prison? Jeremiah 37:20; Jeremiah 38:26.

NOTE: 'We should not lose courage when assailed by temptation. Often when placed in a trying situation we doubt that the Spirit of God has been leading us. But it was the Spirit's leading that brought Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. When God brings us into trial, He has a purpose to accomplish for our good. Jesus did not presume on God's promises by go-

ing unbidden into temptation, neither did He give up to despondency when temptation came upon Him. Nor should we. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." He says, "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High: and call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." 1 Corinthians 10:13; Psalm 50:14, 15.' *Desire of Ages*, page 126.

'In the dungeon'

12. How did a king's weakness lead to Jeremiah being thrown into the miry dungeon as a traitor? Jeremiah 38:3-6; Lamentations 3:6, 53.

NOTE: 'When called to drink of the cup of tribulation and sorrow, and when tempted in his misery to say, "My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord," he recalled the providences of God in his behalf, and triumphantly exclaimed, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness.'" *My Life Today*, page 327.

13. Whom did God prompt to go to the King to ask for Jeremiah's release? Jeremiah 38:7-13.

NOTE: 'The people of God in these last days must expect to enter into the thick of the conflict, for the prophetic Word says, "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." *Christ Triumphant*, page 259.

'The people of God, some in prison cells, some hidden in solitary retreats in the forests and the mountains, still plead for divine protection, while in every quarter companies of armed men, urged on by hosts of evil angels, are preparing for the work of death. It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of His chosen. Saith the Lord; "Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth . . . to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel. And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of His arm, with the indignation of His anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones." Isaiah 30:29, 30.' *Great Controversy*, page 635.

'We must cherish and cultivate the faith of which prophets and apostles have testified, the faith that lays hold on the promises of God and waits for deliverance in His appointed time and way. The sure word of prophecy will meet its final fulfilment in the glorious advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords.' *Maranatha*, page 58.

Lesson 9: May 27-June 2

'Lord, Thou knowest'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.' Jeremiah 17:7.

STUDY HELP: *Christian Service*, page 107.

LESSON AIM: To show the personal spiritual life of Jeremiah, his prayers and his concerns, and how God answered them.

Introduction

'Perplexed in spirit, bowed down with sorrow over the sufferings of those who had refused to repent of their sins, the prophet appealed to God for further enlightenment concerning the divine purpose for mankind. . . . The prayer of the prophet was graciously answered. "The word of the Lord unto Jeremiah" in that hour of distress, when the faith of the messenger of truth was being tried as by fire, was: "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for Me?" The city was soon to fall into the hand of the Chaldeans; its gates and palaces were to be set on fire and burned; but, notwithstanding the fact that destruction was imminent and the inhabitants of Jerusalem were to be carried away captive, nevertheless the eternal purpose of Jehovah for Israel was yet to be fulfilled.' *Prophets & Kings*, pages 470, 471.

'Unto thee have I revealed my cause'

1. How do the writings of Jeremiah show his personal loneliness and how the Lord was often his only support? Lamentations 3:14; Lamentations 3:52-58.

NOTE: 'He whose heart is fixed to serve God will find opportunity to witness for Him. Difficulties will be powerless to hinder him who is determined to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. In the strength gained by prayer and a study of the word, he will seek virtue and forsake vice. Looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of the faith, who endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself, the believer will willingly brave contempt and derision. And help and grace sufficient for every circumstance are promised by Him whose word is truth. His everlasting arms encircle the soul that turns to Him for aid. In His care we may rest safely, saying, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee." Psalm 56:3. To all who put their trust in Him, God will fulfil His promise.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 467.

2. How did God describe his treacherous family, and what warning was Jeremiah given? Jeremiah 12:6. Compare Psalm 27:10-14.

NOTE: 'The time is right upon us when every kind of deception will be practised. Christ says, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing." They speak fair words, but all the time they are watching to see how they can get gain for themselves. They are full of selfishness, and work at cross purposes with God. "Ye shall know them by their fruits," the Saviour declares.' *Youth's Instructor*, July 31, 1902.

'The swelling of Jordan'

3. What question did Jeremiah ask of God concerning the wicked? Jeremiah 12:1. Compare Psalm 73:3, 5, 12-13.

NOTE: 'The mysterious providence which permits the righteous to suffer persecution at the hand of the wicked, has been a cause of great perplexity to many who are weak in faith. Some are even ready to cast away their confidence in God, because He suffers the basest of men to prosper, while the best and purest are afflicted and tormented by their cruel power. How, it is asked, can One who is just and merciful, and who is also infinite in power, tolerate such injustice and oppression? This is a question with which we have nothing to do. God has given us sufficient evidence of His love, and we are not to doubt His goodness because we cannot understand the workings of His providence. Said the Saviour to His disciples, foreseeing the doubts that would press upon their souls in days of trial and darkness, "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." [John 15:20.] Jesus suffered for us more than any of his followers can be made to suffer through the cruelty of wicked men. Those who are called to endure torture and martyrdom, are but following in the steps of God's dear Son. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise." [2 Peter 3:9.] He does not forget or neglect His children; but He permits the wicked to reveal their true character, that none who desire to do His will may be deceived concerning them. Again, the righteous are placed in the furnace of affliction, that they themselves may be purified; that their example may convince others of the reality of faith and godliness; and also that their consistent course may condemn the ungodly and unbelieving.' *Great Controversy*, pages 47-48.

4. How did God respond to the prayer of Jeremiah? Jeremiah 12:5.

NOTE: 'Instead of developing a character and enduring trial and bearing with courage and perseverance, they sink under the cloud. Said the angel, "If thou hast run with the footmen and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? And if in the land of peace wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" [Jeremiah 12:5]. The time of trouble is before us, and if there is lack of courage and ambition now, how will they pass the fearful scenes of that trying hour?' *Manuscript Releases, volume 15*, page 331.

'Go and stand in the gate'

5. What taunting question did the people of Judah ask Jeremiah? Jeremiah 17:15.

NOTE: 'As the gospel message spread in Pisidia, the unbelieving Jews of Antioch in their blind prejudice "stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them" from that district. The apostles were not discouraged by this treatment; they remembered the words of their Master: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Matthew 5:11, 12.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 176.

6. In direct answer to Jeremiah's prayer, what task did God give him? Jeremiah 17:19-22

NOTE: 'Paul knew that there was before the church a time of great peril. He knew that faithful, earnest work would have to be done by those left in charge of the churches; and he wrote to Timothy, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." This solemn charge to one so zealous and faithful as was Timothy is a strong testimony to the importance and responsibility of the work of the gospel minister. Summoning Timothy before the bar of God, Paul bids him preach the word, not the sayings and customs of men; to be ready to witness for God whenever opportunity should present itself, before large congregations and private circles, by the way and at the fireside, to friends and to enemies, whether in safety or exposed to hardship and peril, reproach and loss.' *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 502-503.

'Go!'

7. In the verbal onslaught of his enemies how did the lonely Jeremiah cry out to God? Jeremiah 18:18-19.

NOTE: 'If we are determined not to be separated from the Source of our strength, Jesus will be just as determined to be at our right hand to help us, that we shall not be put to shame before our enemies. The grace of Christ can accomplish for us that which all our efforts will fail to do.' *Counsels on Health*, page 424

8. In response to his anguish what activity did God set for Jeremiah? Jeremiah 19: 1-2.

NOTE: 'For the disheartened there is a sure remedy, faith, prayer, work. Faith and activity will impart assurance and satisfaction that will increase day by day. Are you tempted to give way to feelings of anxious foreboding or utter despondency? In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding, fear not. Have faith in God. He knows your need. He has all power. His infinite love and compassion never weary. Fear not that He will fail of fulfilling His promise. He is eternal truth. Never will He change the covenant He has made with those who love Him. And He will bestow upon His faithful servants the measure of efficiency that their need demands.' *Christian Service*, page 107.

‘Sing!’

9. When he heard of the plotting of his enemies against him, to whom did Jeremiah unburden his heart? Jeremiah 20:10, 12.

NOTE: ‘Let all who are afflicted or unjustly used cry to God. Turn away from those whose hearts are as steel, and make your requests known to your Maker. Never is one repulsed who comes to Him with a contrite heart. Not one sincere prayer is lost. Amid the anthems of the celestial choir, God hears the cries of the weakest human being.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 174.

10. By what means did Jeremiah the musician express his confidence in God’s ability to deliver? Jeremiah 20:13.

NOTE: ‘In just a little time Christ will come in power and great glory, and what a terrible thing it would be if we should not be ready! Let us get ready at once. Separate evil from you, begin to sing the song of praise and rejoicing here below. Let your lips be tuned to praise God. Angels in heaven are praising God all the time, and here are mortals for whom Christ left the heavenly home and suffered mockery, insult, and death, that He might lift us up to sit in heavenly places, and they offer no song of praise. If you sit in heavenly places with Christ, you cannot refrain from praising God. Begin to educate your tongues to praise Him and train your hearts to make melody to God; and when the evil one begins to settle his gloom about you, sing praise to God. When things go crossways at your homes, strike up a song about the matchless charms of the Son of God, and I tell you, when you touch this strain, Satan will leave you. You can drive out the enemy with his gloom; and you can see, oh, so much clearer, the love and compassion of your heavenly Father.’ *In Heavenly Places*, page 95.

‘New every morning’

11. How did Jeremiah extol the goodness of God in the midst of hatred and loneliness? Lamentations 3:22-23.

NOTE: ‘Naturally of a timid and shrinking disposition, Jeremiah longed for the peace and quiet of a life of retirement, where he need not witness the continued impenitence of his beloved nation. His heart was wrung with anguish over the ruin wrought by sin. The experiences through which Jeremiah passed in the days of his youth and also in the later years of his ministry, taught him the lesson that “the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” He learned to pray, “O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in Thine anger, lest Thou bring me to nothing” (Jeremiah 10:23, 24). When called to drink of the cup of tribulation and sorrow, and when tempted in his misery to say, “My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord,” he recalled the providences of God on his behalf and triumphantly exclaimed, “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. . . . The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him.’ *Conflict & Courage*, page 237.

12. Although the problems Jeremiah faced did not cease, what was the basis of his hope? Lamentations 3:24-26. Consider Jeremiah 17:7-8.

NOTE: ‘Not only are we to rejoice, but we are to “glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”’ *Signs of the Times*, February 18, 1903.

Lesson 10: June 3-9 Will ye not receive instruction?

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Ye shall walk in the ways which the Lord your God commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.’ Deuteronomy 5:33.

STUDY HELP: *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 117.

Aim: To see in this living object lesson, the obedience and honour that God looks for in those who call Him Father.

Introduction

‘Temporal and spiritual prosperity are made conditional upon obedience to the law of God. But we do not read God’s Word, and thus become familiar with the terms of the blessing that is to be given to all who hearken diligently to God’s law and teach it diligently in their families. Obedience to God’s Word is our life, our happiness.’ *Child Guidance*, page 80.

‘Bring them into the house of the Lord’

1. In the days of Jehoiakim to whose house was Jeremiah commanded to go? Jeremiah 35:1-2, first part.

NOTE: ‘Those times of change, so fraught with peril to the Israelitish nation, were marked with many messages from Heaven through Jeremiah. . . . As the threatened danger came closer, he taught the people by means of a series of acted parables, hoping thus to arouse them to a sense of their obligation to God.’ *Prophets & Kings*, page 423.

2. Where did God instruct Jeremiah to take the whole house of the Rechabites? Jeremiah 35:2, middle part.

NOTE: ‘Those today to whom the Lord has given great light will find their only safety in walking in the way of the Lord, plac-

ing themselves where He can carry out His will through them. God will do large things for those who will learn of Him, not taking counsel of themselves, but of Him who never makes a mistake. Our safety, our wisdom, is in recognising and heeding God's instructions.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 2, page 1032.*

'A man of God'

3. To whom did the room belong? Jeremiah 35:4. See 1 Kings 6:3-9.

4. Who was the grandfather of the sons of Hanan? How is he described? Jeremiah 35:4.

NOTE: 'We who claim to believe the truth should reveal its fruits in our words and character. We are to be far advanced in a knowledge of Jesus Christ, in the reception of His love for God and for our neighbour, in order to have the sunlight of heaven shining in our daily life. Truth must reach down to the deepest recesses of the soul, and cleanse away everything unlike the spirit of Christ, and the vacuum be supplied by the attributes of His character who was pure and holy and undefiled, that all the springs of the heart may be as flowers, fragrant with perfume, a sweet-smelling savour, a savour of life unto life. It is truth enshrined in the soul that makes one a man of God.' *Our Father Cares, page 92.*

'We will drink no wine'

5. When they were come in, what did Jeremiah set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites? Jeremiah 35:5.

NOTE: 'Every soul of us living upon the face of the earth must have our test and trials. Circumstances will occur in the providence of God when we will be called to vindicate our faith. We shall give decided evidence which side we are on. We shall either be decidedly the vindicators of God's holy law, or on the side of the transgressors.' *Christ Triumphant, page 59.*

6. What was their reply? Jeremiah 35:6 (first part)

NOTE: 'Children are admonished by the apostle to obey their parents in the Lord, to be helpful and submissive. Those who truly love God will not strive for their own way and thus bring unhappiness to themselves and to others. They will strive to represent Christ in character. How precious is the thought that the youth who strive against sin, who believe, and wait and watch for Christ's appearing, who submit to parental authority, and who love the Lord Jesus, will be among those who love His appearing and who meet Him in peace.' *In Heavenly Places, page 216.*

'Our father commanded us'

7. What five injunctions had their father Jonadab, the son of Rechab, placed upon them? Jeremiah 35:6, last part-7.

NOTE: 'Those who have the mind of Christ will keep all of God's commandments, irrespective of circumstances. The Majesty of heaven says, "I have kept my Father's commandments" (John 15:10). Adam and Eve dared to transgress the Lord's requirements, and the terrible result of their sin should be a warning to us not to follow their example of disobedience. Christ prayed for His disciples in these words: "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). There is no genuine sanctification except through obedience to the truth. Those who love God with all the heart will love all His commandments also. The sanctified heart is in harmony with the precepts of God's law; for they are holy, just, and good.' *The Sanctified Life, page 67.*

8. How faithful had they been to their father's word, except in the one circumstance of lately moving into Jerusalem? Jeremiah 35:8-10. See verse 11.

NOTE: 'The prophet Malachi raises the questions, "Who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth?" . . . It is an exalted privilege to become sons and daughters of God. Says Christ, "I have kept My Father's commandments." Christ pleased His Father in all things; it was His meat and drink to do the will of His Father in heaven. We should imitate Christ in His implicit obedience to His Father's commands.' *Review & Herald, January 5, 1886.*

'Will ye not receive instruction?'

9. When the word of the Lord came again to Jeremiah, what question was he to ask the citizens of Judah and Jerusalem? Jeremiah 35:13.

NOTE: 'Christ overlooked the world and all ages from the height of Olivet; and His words are applicable to every soul who slights the pleadings of divine mercy. Scorned of His love, He addresses you today. It is "thou, even thou," who shouldest know the things that belong to thy peace. Christ is shedding bitter tears for you, who have no tears to shed for yourself. Already that fatal hardness of heart which destroyed the Pharisees is manifest in you. And every evidence of the grace of God, every ray of divine light, is either melting and subduing the soul, or confirming it in hopeless impenitence. Christ foresaw that Jerusalem would remain obdurate and impenitent; yet all the guilt, all the consequences of rejected mercy, lay at her own door. Thus it will be with every soul who is following the same course. The Lord declares, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." "Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto My words, nor to My law, but rejected it." Hosea 13:9; Jeremiah 6:19.' *Desire of Ages, page 588.*

"Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, saying, . . . Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to My words? saith the Lord. The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment." Here God contrasts the obedience of the Rechabites with the disobedience and rebellion of His people, who will not receive

His words of reproof and warning. The Rechabites were commended for their ready and willing obedience, while God's people refused to be reproved by their prophets.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 238.

10. What was God's promised blessing on the Rechabites for their obedience to their earthly father? Jeremiah 35:18, 19.

NOTE: 'So it is with every other one of God's requirements. All His gifts are promised on condition of obedience. God has a heaven full of blessings for those who will co-operate with Him. All who obey Him may with confidence claim the fulfilment of His promises.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 145.

'That ye may prolong your days'

11. What was God's intention in giving His laws to the Children of Israel? Deuteronomy 5:29, 33; Malachi 1:5; Isaiah 60:1-3.

NOTE: 'Not long hence it will be found that it is no light matter to work against God in a single instance. Not long hence it will be found that the approval of God is worth more than any amount of silver and gold. It will be found that to every action there has been an invisible witness who has taken cognizance, and has written it in a book, so that every man will be judged according to what he has done, whether it be good or evil. In that day sentence will be pronounced against every one that has done evil, whether he be Jew or Gentile, small or great, rich or poor, free or bond. The wise man says, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him.'" *Review & Herald*, October 1, 1895.

12. What is the ultimate blessing for obedience? Revelation 22:14.

NOTE: 'The gates of the city will swing back on their glittering hinges, and the nations that have kept the truth will enter in. A crown will be placed on every head. The words will be spoken: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Whom is it prepared for? For the obedient, those who keep His commandments, and do His will. As holy angels touch their harps, He wants you to follow, singing the song of triumph in the city of God.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 363.

Lesson 11: June 10-16
'To build and to plant'

MEMORY VERSE: 'For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.' Hebrews 13:14.

STUDY HELP: *God's Amazing Grace*, page 372.

LESSON AIM: To consider the complete and ultimate gathering of the kingdom of God.

Introduction

'Amid the general ruin into which the nation was rapidly passing, Jeremiah was often permitted to look beyond the distressing scenes of the present to the glorious prospects of the future, when God's people should be ransomed from the land of the enemy and planted again in Zion.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 408.

'Will gather him and keep him'

1. As well as giving Jeremiah warnings for rebellious Judah, what other message had God for them? Jeremiah 1:10, last part.

NOTE: 'Of his call to the prophetic mission, Jeremiah himself wrote: "The Lord put forth His hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." Jeremiah 1:9, 10. Thank God for the words, "to build, and to plant." By these words Jeremiah was assured of the Lord's purpose to restore and to heal.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 409.

2. What promises did God give to Judah? Jeremiah 31:24-28; Jeremiah 31:10; Jeremiah 23: 26.

NOTE: 'Tidings of this decree reached the farthestmost provinces of the king's realm, and everywhere among the children of the dispersion there was great rejoicing. Many, like Daniel, had been studying the prophecies, and had been seeking God for His promised intervention in behalf of Zion. And now their prayers were being answered.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 559.

3. After all his earlier heartbreak and anguish, how does Jeremiah express his comfortable relief in these prophetic words? Jeremiah 31:26.

NOTE: "'Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned.'" Isaiah 40:1, 2. In the darkest days of her long conflict with evil, the

church of God has been given revelations of the eternal purpose of Jehovah. His people have been permitted to look beyond the trials of the present to the triumphs of the future, when, the warfare having been accomplished, the redeemed will enter into possession of the promised land.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 372,

'Believe in the Lord your God'

4. How did Jeremiah demonstrate his faith in God's plan? Jeremiah 32:6-9.

NOTE: 'Laying fast hold on the promises of God, Jeremiah, by means of an acted parable, illustrated before the inhabitants of the fated city his strong faith in the ultimate fulfilment of God's purpose for His people. In the presence of witnesses, and with careful observance of all necessary legal forms, he purchased for seventeen shekels an ancestral field situated in the neighbouring village of Anathoth. From every human point of view this purchase of land in territory already under the control of the Babylonians, appeared to be an act of folly. The prophet himself had been foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem, the desolation of Judea, and the utter ruin of the kingdom. He had been prophesying a long period of captivity in faraway Babylon. Already advanced in years, he could never hope to receive personal benefit from the purchase he had made. However, his study of the prophecies that were recorded in the Scriptures had created within his heart a firm conviction that the Lord purposed to restore to the children of the captivity their ancient possession of the Land of Promise. With the eye of faith Jeremiah saw the exiles returning at the end of the years of affliction and reoccupying the land of their fathers. Through the purchase of the Anathoth estate he would do what he could to inspire others with the hope that brought so much comfort to his own heart.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 466-469.

5. On the basis of what promise did Jeremiah tell Baruch to put away the signed evidence in an earthen vessel for safety? Jeremiah 32:15.

NOTE: 'Having signed the deeds of transfer and secured the countersignatures of witnesses, Jeremiah charged Baruch his secretary: "Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land." Jeremiah 32:14, 15.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 469.

'Let him go up to Jerusalem'

6. What details did Ezra the scribe record of the return of the exiles to their own land at the end of the seventy years captivity? Ezra 1:1-3, 5-7; 2:1; 64-67, 3:4.

NOTE: 'Under the favour shown them by Cyrus, nearly fifty thousand of the children of the captivity had taken advantage of the decree permitting their return. These, however, in comparison with the hundreds of thousands scattered throughout the provinces of Medo-Persia, were but a mere remnant. The great majority of the Israelites had chosen to remain in the land of their exile rather than undergo the hardships of the return journey and the re-establishment of their desolated cities and homes.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 598.

7. In spite of the fact that the ten northern tribes had gone into captivity earlier than Judah and were now scattered, what picture did God give of both houses of Israel united as a single kingdom? Jeremiah 33:7; Jeremiah 23:3-6.

NOTE: 'Jeremiah also bore witness of the coming Redeemer as a Prince of the house of David: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 223.

'The everlasting covenant'

8. What was to unite them? Jeremiah 31:31-33.

NOTE: 'The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the "second," or "new," covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed after the blood of the first covenant. The covenant of grace is not a new truth, for it existed in the mind of God from all eternity. This is why it is called the everlasting covenant.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 77.

'Whoever of the human family give themselves to Christ, whoever hear the truth and obey it, become children of one family. The ignorant and the wise, the rich and the poor, the heathen and the slave, white or black, Jesus paid the purchase money for their souls. If they believe on Him, His cleansing blood is applied to them. The black man's name is written in the book of life beside the white man's. All are one in Christ.' *Selected Messages, book 2*, page 342.

9. How does God through the new covenant in Christ, yearn for the return and love of His prodigal sons and daughters in the human race? Jeremiah 24:7; Jeremiah 32:38-41. Compare Ezekiel 11:17-20, Revelation 21:7.

NOTE: 'I was pointed to some who are in the great error of believing that it is their duty to go to Old Jerusalem, and think they have a work to do there before the Lord comes. Such a view is calculated to take the mind and interest from the present work of the Lord, under the message of the third angel; for those who think that they are yet to go to Jerusalem will have their minds there, and their means will be withheld from the cause of present truth to get themselves and others there . . . I also saw that Old Jerusalem never would be built up; and that Satan was doing his utmost to lead the minds of the children of the Lord into these things now, in the gathering time, to keep them from throwing their whole interest into the present work of the Lord, and to cause them to neglect the necessary preparation for the day of the Lord.' *Early Writings*, pages 75, 76.

10. What did Jeremiah say concerning the promised Messiah who would establish the New or Everlasting Covenant through his blood? Jeremiah 23:5.

NOTE: 'Of the church of Christ it is written, "This is the name wherewith she shall be called. The Lord our Righteousness" (Jeremiah 33:16). This name is put upon every follower of Christ. It is the heritage of the child of God. The family are called after the Father. The prophet Jeremiah, in the time of Israel's sore distress and tribulation, prayed, "We are called by Thy name; leave us not (Jeremiah 14:9)." *God's Amazing Grace*, page 94.

'The kingdom of God shall be taken from you'

11. Where in the Gospels does Jesus state that the literal nation of Judah had been rejected? And for what were they condemned? Matthew 21:43; Matthew 23:13.

NOTE: 'Christ would have averted the doom of the Jewish nation if the people had received Him. But envy and jealousy made them implacable. They determined that they would not receive Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. They rejected the Light of the world, and thenceforth their lives were surrounded with darkness as the darkness of midnight. The doom foretold came upon the Jewish nation. Their own fierce passions, uncontrolled, wrought their ruin. In their blind rage they destroyed one another. Their rebellious, stubborn pride brought upon them the wrath of their Roman conquerors. Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple laid in ruins, and its site ploughed like a field. The children of Judah perished by the most horrible forms of death. Millions were sold, to serve as bondmen in heathen lands. As a people the Jews had failed of fulfilling God's purpose, and the vineyard was taken from them. The privileges they had abused, the work they had slighted, was entrusted to others.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 295-296.

12. Under the everlasting covenant what are the characteristics of those who form the kingdom of God? Daniel 7:14, 27; Revelation 22:14.

NOTE: 'None who have had the light of truth will enter the city of God as commandment-breakers. His law lies at the foundation of His government in earth and in heaven. If they have knowingly trampled upon and despised His law on the earth, they will not be taken to heaven to do the same work there; there is no change of character when Christ comes. The character-building is to go on during the hours of probation. Day by day their actions are registered in the books of heaven, and they will in the great day of God be rewarded as their works have been. It will then be seen who receives the blessing. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).' *Faith & Works*, page 43.

'The New Jerusalem'

13. Which Jerusalem is to be the holy city - the literal earthly city of Jerusalem or the New Jerusalem? Jeremiah 31:11, 12. Compare Matthew 24:1, 2, Hebrews 13:14; Revelation 21:1-5, Revelation 22:14.

NOTE: 'We are homeward bound. He who loved us so much as to die for us hath builded for us a city. The New Jerusalem is our place of rest. There will be no sadness in the city of God. No wail of sorrow, no dirge of crushed hopes and buried affections, will evermore be heard. Soon the garments of heaviness will be changed for the wedding garment. Soon we shall witness the coronation of our King. Those whose lives have been hidden with Christ, those who on this earth have fought the good fight of faith, will shine forth with the Redeemer's glory in the kingdom of God.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 362.

'It is stated of Abraham that he looked for a city whose builder and maker is God [Hebrews 11:10, 16]. So with every one of us. We are only pilgrims and strangers in this world. We are seeking the city which Abraham looked for, whose builder and maker is God.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 112.

14. How will God's everlasting plan for a nation of kings and priests, alluded to in Jeremiah 33:17-18, be fulfilled in those who serve and follow Christ? Exodus 19:6; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Revelation 1:6.

NOTE: 'And the remnant are not only pardoned and accepted, but honoured. "A fair mitre" is set upon their heads. They are to be as kings and priests unto God . . . These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 353.

Lesson 12: June 17-23

'The heart is deceitful'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.' 1 Corinthians 10:11-12.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies volume 5*, page 258

LESSON AIM: To consider how it is possible to think one is all right when one is all wrong, and how God wishes to correct us.

Introduction

'Ministers and people are unprepared for the time in which they live, and nearly all who profess to believe present truth are unprepared to understand the work of preparation for this time. In their present state of worldly ambition, with their lack of consecration to God, their devotion to self, they are wholly unfitted to receive the latter rain and, having done all, to stand against the wrath of Satan, who by his inventions would cause them to make shipwreck of faith, fastening upon them some pleasing self-deception. They think they are all right when they are all wrong.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 466.

Ropes of sand

- 1. What were the promises that the Children of Israel made to God when He first brought them out of Egypt, and how successful was their resolve? Jeremiah 2:20; Jeremiah 7:8-11.**

NOTE: 'You will be in constant peril until you understand the true force of the will. You may believe and promise all things, but your promises or your faith are of no value until you put your will on the side of faith and action. If you fight the fight of faith with all your will-power, you will conquer. Your feelings, your impressions, your emotions, are not to be trusted, for they are not reliable, especially with your perverted ideas; and the knowledge of your broken promises and your forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in yourself, and the faith of others in you. But you need not despair. . . . It is for you to yield up your will to the will of Jesus Christ; and as you do this, God will immediately take possession, and work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. Your whole nature will then be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; and even your thoughts will be subject to Him.' *Messages to Young People*, pages 151-152.

- 2. Because the people of Judah had forsaken God and turned to sexual immorality what had they brought upon themselves? Jeremiah 2:14-17.**

NOTE: 'The crime that brought the judgments of God upon Israel was that of licentiousness. The forwardness of women to entrap souls did not end at Baal-peor. Notwithstanding the punishment that followed the sinners in Israel, the same crime was repeated many times. Satan was most active in seeking to make Israel's overthrow complete. The licentious practice of the Hebrews accomplished for them that which all the warfare of nations and the enchantments of Balaam could not do. They became separated from their God. Their covering and protection were removed from them. God turned to be their enemy.' *The Adventist Home*, page 326.

'Truth is perished'

- 3. How did God express the completeness of their fall into apostasy? Jeremiah 1:16; Jeremiah 2:12-13; Jeremiah 2:11.**

NOTE: 'We are to enter into no confederacy with those who do not love or fear God. Those who have not the light of present truth, who are unable to endure the seeing of Him who is invisible, are surrounded by spiritual darkness that is as the darkness of midnight. Within, all is dreariness. They know not the meaning of joy in the Lord. They take no interest in eternal realities. Their attention is engrossed by the trifling things of earth. They make haste unto vanity, striving by unfair means to obtain advantages. Having forsaken God, the fountain of living waters, they hew out for themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. Let it not be thus with those who have tasted the power of the world to come.' *Counsels on Health*, page 300.

- 4. How did God emphasise the evil and bitter thing they had done? Jeremiah 2:19. 'Forsaken the Lord thy God . . . My fear is not in thee.' Compare the strong last-day appeal of Revelation 14:7.**

NOTE: 'In this time of well-nigh universal apostasy, God calls upon His messengers to proclaim His law in the spirit and power of Elias. As John the Baptist, in preparing a people for Christ's first advent, called their attention to the Ten Commandments, so we are to give, with no uncertain sound, the message: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." With the earnestness that characterised Elijah the prophet and John the Baptist, we are to strive to prepare the way for Christ's second advent.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 290.

'I am not polluted'

- 5. With what direct words did God express the result of their transgression? Jeremiah 9:3; Jeremiah 7:28. Consider 2 Peter 1:10-12.**

NOTE: 'God's covenant with them had been, "Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you." Shamelessly and repeatedly had this covenant been broken. The chosen nation had "walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward." Jeremiah 7:23, 24. "Why," the Lord inquired, "is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding?" Jeremiah 8:5. In the language of the prophet it was because they had obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God and had refused to be corrected. See Jeremiah 5:3. "Truth is perished," he mourned, "and is cut off from their mouth." "The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My people know not the judgment of the Lord." "Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord: shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" Jeremiah 7:28; 8:7; Jeremiah 9:9.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 414.

- 6. What was their astonishing response to God? Jeremiah 2:23, 25, last part.**

NOTE: 'Let those who feel inclined to make a high profession of holiness look into the mirror of God's law. As they see its far-reaching claims, and understand its work as a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, they will not boast of

sinlessness. "If we," says John, not separating himself from his brethren, "say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:8, 10, 9.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 562.

'We are lords'

7. Considering the many gods they had made for themselves, with what words do they call upon God in the day of trouble? Jeremiah 2:27-29.

NOTE: 'Inspiration declares, "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?" Proverbs 21:27. The God of heaven is "of purer eyes than to behold evil," and cannot "look on iniquity." Habakkuk 1:13. It is not because He is unwilling to forgive that He turns from the transgressor; it is because the sinner refuses to make use of the abundant provisions of grace that God is unable to deliver from sin. "The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." Isaiah 59:1-2.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 323.

8. What searching questions did God ask the people of Judah and what was their response? Jeremiah 2:31.

NOTE: 'Men must not lift up themselves in their own finite wisdom, as did ancient Israel, take themselves out of the hands of God, and think in their human wisdom and supposed smartness they can do much better when left to their own imaginings. Thus thought the inhabitants of the world destroyed by a flood. When they fully decided that they had no need of God, then the Lord decided He had no need of them, and they and all their wicked works perished in the waters of the flood. Oh God, make us know Thy ways and to choose to be led and guided by Thy unerring counsel.' *1888 Materials*, page 777.

9. How did God warn them about glorying in themselves? Jeremiah 9:23-24.

NOTE: "'This is life eternal," Christ said, "that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." John 17:3. And the prophet Jeremiah declared: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 9:23, 24.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 531.

'I am innocent ... I have not sinned'

10. As God looked upon the people of Judah, what did He see? Jeremiah 2:34.

NOTE: 'The Saviour's words revealed to His hearers the fact that, while they were condemning others as transgressors, they were themselves equally guilty; for they were cherishing malice and hatred. Across the sea from the place where they were assembled was the country of Bashan, a lonely region, whose wild gorges and wooded hills had long been a favourite lurking ground for criminals of all descriptions. Reports of robbery and murder committed there were fresh in the minds of the people, and many were zealous in denouncing these evildoers. At the same time they were themselves passionate and contentious; they cherished the most bitter hatred of their Roman oppressors and felt themselves at liberty to hate and despise all other peoples, and even their own countrymen who did not in all things conform to their ideas. In all this they were violating the law which declares, "Thou shalt not kill.'" *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pages 55-56.

11. In contrast, what was their protesting reply? Jeremiah 2:35.

NOTE: 'We must have a knowledge of ourselves, a knowledge that will result in contrition, before we can find pardon and peace. The Pharisee felt no conviction of sin. The Holy Spirit could not work with him. His soul was encased in a self-righteous armour which the arrows of God, barbed and true-aimed by angel hands, failed to penetrate. It is only he who knows himself to be a sinner that Christ can save. He came "to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. But "they that are whole need not a physician." Luke 5:31. We must know our real condition, or we shall not feel our need of Christ's help. We must understand our danger, or we shall not flee to the refuge. We must feel the pain of our wounds, or we should not desire healing.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 158.

'The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance'

12. How is it possible to consider oneself a child of God and yet be so blind to sin? Jeremiah 17:9.

NOTE: 'No man can of himself understand his errors. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Jeremiah 17:9. The lips may express a poverty of soul that the heart does not acknowledge. While speaking to God of poverty of spirit, the heart may be swelling with the conceit of its own superior humility and exalted righteousness. In one way only can a true knowledge of self be obtained. We must behold Christ. It is ignorance of Him that makes men so uplifted in their own righteousness. When we contemplate His purity and excellence, we shall see our own weakness and poverty and defects as they really are. We shall see ourselves lost and hopeless, clad in garments of self-righteousness, like every other sinner. We shall see that if we are ever saved, it will not be through our own goodness, but through God's infinite grace.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 159.

13. How have our lives fallen into the Laodicean condition described by John in Revelation 3:14-17? Revelation 2:4; Matthew 25:5; Proverbs 14:14.

NOTE: 'As man yields to temptation, and indulges in sin, his mind becomes darkened. The moral sense is perverted. The warnings of conscience are disregarded, and its voice is less clearly heard. He gradually loses the power to distinguish between right and wrong, until he has no true sense or his standing before God. He may observe the forms of religion and zealously maintain its doctrines, while destitute of its spirit. His condition is that described by the True Witness: "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Revelation 3:17. When the Spirit of God, by message of reproof, declares this to be his condition, he cannot see that the message is true.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 96.

'Here is represented a people who pride themselves in their possession of spiritual knowledge and advantages. But they have not responded to the unmerited blessings that God has bestowed upon them. They have been full of rebellion, ingratitude, and forgetfulness of God; and still He has dealt with them as a loving, forgiving father deals with an ungrateful, wayward son. They have resisted His grace, abused His privileges, slighted His opportunities, and have been satisfied to sink down in contentment, in lamentable ingratitude, hollow formalism, and hypocritical insincerity. . . . Christ sees that which man does not see. He sees the sins which, if not repented of, will exhaust the patience of a long-suffering God. Christ cannot take up the names of those who are satisfied in their own self-sufficiency. He cannot importune on behalf of a people who feel no need of His help, who claim to know and possess everything.' *Faith & Works*, page 83.

14. What heartfelt prayer should arise from our own lips in contemplating the sad condition of the people of Judah? Psalm 139:23. Consider 1 Corinthians 10:11-12.

NOTE: 'A nominal acceptance of truth is good as far as it goes, and the ability to give a reason for our faith is a good accomplishment, but if the truth does not go deeper than this, the soul will never be saved. The heart must be purified from all moral defilement. "I know also, my God, that Thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness." 1 Chronicles 29:17. "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23, 24.' *Our High Calling*, page 142.

Lesson 13: June 24-30 'Justice, mercy and truth'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death.' Jeremiah 21:8.

STUDY HELP: *Conflict and Courage*, page 350.

LESSON AIM: To show that the themes running through Jeremiah can be summarised as justice and mercy, with honour for the truth of God in the face of apostasy being at the heart of all the recorded words of Jeremiah.

Introduction

'From the rise and fall of nations as made plain in the pages of Holy Writ, they need to learn how worthless is mere outward and worldly glory. Babylon, with all its power and its magnificence, the like of which our world has never since beheld, power and magnificence which to the people of that day seemed so stable and enduring, how completely has it passed away! As "the flower of the grass" it has perished. So perishes all that has not God for its foundation. Only that which is bound up with His purpose and expresses His character can endure. His principles are the only steadfast things our world knows.' *Education*, page 183.

'If thou wilt return'

1. Why were the judgements of God being poured out on Judah? Jeremiah 1:16. Compare Daniel 9:5-14

NOTE: 'In addition to these wonderful pleadings, the Lord gave His erring people the very words with which they might turn to Him. They were to say: "Behold, we come unto Thee; for Thou art the Lord our God. Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel. . . . We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: for we have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God.'" *Prophets & Kings*, page 410.

2. What strong exhortation had Jeremiah given them so that the judgements of the Lord could be turned away from them? Jeremiah 4:1,14, Jeremiah 5:1, 3.

NOTE: 'God had pleaded with Judah not to provoke Him to anger, but they had hearkened not. Finally sentence was pronounced against them. They were to be led away captive to Babylon. The Chaldeans were to be used as the instrument by which God would chastise His disobedient people. The sufferings of the men of Judah were to be in proportion to the light they had had and to the warnings they had despised and rejected. Long had God delayed His judgments, but now He would visit His displeasure upon them as a last effort to check them in their evil course.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 425.

'The time of the Lord's vengeance'

3. At the end of the seventy years captivity, why were the Judeans warned to flee from Babylon? Jeremiah 51:6. Jeremiah 51: 11. Jeremiah 25:12. Compare Daniel's anguish for desolate sanctuary. Daniel 9:17.

NOTE: 'The writings of Jeremiah were within their reach, and in these was plainly set forth the length of time that should elapse before the restoration of Israel from Babylon. "When seventy years are accomplished," the Lord had foretold through His messenger, "I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity" . . . "After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon," the Lord had declared, "I will visit you, and perform My good word toward you, in causing you to return."' *Prophets & Kings*, pages 552-553.

4. How long suffering is God towards sinners? Jeremiah 51:5.

NOTE: 'Many and wonderful are the promises recorded in the Scriptures regarding the church. "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; thy walls are continually before Me." Isaiah 49:8-16.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 11.

'Glad and rejoiced'

5. When Babylon was to be destroyed what would be the focus of the destruction? Jeremiah 50:1-2. Compare Exodus 12:12.

NOTE: 'Suddenly a darkness settled upon the land, so thick and black that it seemed a "darkness which may be felt." Not only were the people deprived of light, but the atmosphere was very oppressive, so that breathing was difficult. "They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings." The sun and moon were objects of worship to the Egyptians; in this mysterious darkness the people and their gods alike were smitten by the power that had undertaken the cause of the bondmen.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 272.

6. What was the mocking attitude of Babylon towards the destruction of Judah? Jeremiah 50:11. Compare the mocking of the Saviour in his suffering, Matthew 27:39-43.

NOTE: 'With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness.' *Great Controversy*, page 635.

'As she hath done, do unto her'

7. To what extent would proud Babylon be destroyed? Jeremiah 25:12; Jeremiah 51:47; Isaiah 13:19.

NOTE: 'Thus "the broad walls of Babylon" became "utterly broken, and her high gates . . . burned with fire." Thus did Jehovah of hosts "cause the arrogance of the proud to cease," and lay low "the haughtiness of the terrible." Thus did "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency," become as Sodom and Gomorrah, a place forever accursed.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 532.

8. What divine principle is seen in the judgements of God? Jeremiah 51:49; Jeremiah 25:14; Jeremiah 50:15.

NOTE: 'Christ came to represent the Father in His true character. He showed that He was not an arbitrary judge, ready to bring judgments upon men, and delighting in condemning and punishing them for their evil deeds. The Lord proclaimed His character to Moses in the mount. "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, 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.'" *Signs of the Times*, November 18, 1889.

9. In meting out punishments against idolatry and rebellion what else does God consider? Jeremiah 21:14. Compare Exodus 20:3-5.

NOTE: 'Limited alone to the earth, [Satan] will not have the privilege of ranging to other planets, to tempt and annoy those who have not fallen. During this time, Satan suffers extremely. Since his fall his life of intense activity has banished reflection; but he is now deprived of his power, and left to contemplate the part which he has acted since first he rebelled against the government of Heaven, and to look forward with trembling and terror to the dreadful future, when he must suffer for all the evil that he has done, and be punished for the sins that he has caused to be committed.' *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4*, page 474.

'The day of the Lord is at hand'

10. Why does God say He will punish Babylon? Jeremiah 50:24; Jeremiah 50:14; Jeremiah 50:29; Isaiah 13:11.

NOTE: 'In his pride and arrogance, with a reckless feeling of security Belshazzar "made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand." All the attractions that wealth and power could command, added splendour to the scene. Beautiful women with their enchantments were among the guests in attendance at the royal banquet. . . . Little did Bel-

shazzar think that there was a heavenly Witness to his idolatrous revelry; that a divine Watcher, unrecognised, looked upon the scene of profanation, heard the sacrilegious mirth, beheld the idolatry.' *Prophets & Kings*, pages 523-524.

11. How are the final judgements of the Lord against present day Babylon and her sorceries described? Revelation 17:1-5; Revelation 18:4-5, 7-9, 21-24.

NOTE: 'There is a mighty earthquake, "such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." Revelation 16:18. The firmament appears to open and shut. The glory from the throne of God seems flashing through. The mountains shake like a reed in the wind, and ragged rocks are scattered on every side. There is a roar as of a coming tempest. The sea is lashed into fury. There is heard the shriek of a hurricane like the voice of demons upon a mission of destruction. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving way. Mountain chains are sinking. Inhabited islands disappear. The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness are swallowed up by the angry waters. Babylon the great has come in remembrance before God, "to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath." Great hailstones, every one "about the weight of a talent," are doing their work of destruction. Revelation 16:19, 21. The proudest cities of the earth are laid low. The lordly palaces, upon which the world's great men have lavished their wealth in order to glorify themselves, are crumbling to ruin before their eyes. Prison walls are rent asunder, and God's people, who have been held in bondage for their faith, are set free.' *Darkness Before Dawn*, page 46.

12. In this conclusion of the conflict of good and evil, what unique degree of punishment is meted out to those who have harmed God's people? Revelation 18:6.

NOTE: 'They "shall have judgment without mercy" that have "showed no mercy." (James 2:13.) Not long hence they will stand before the Judge of all the earth, to render an account for the pain they have caused to the bodies and souls of His heritage. They may now indulge in false accusations, they may deride those whom God has appointed to do His work, they may consign His believing ones to prison, to the chain gang, to banishment, to death; but for every pang of anguish, every tear shed, they must answer. God will reward them double for their sins. Concerning Babylon, the symbol of the apostate church, He says to His ministers of judgment, "Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double." Revelation 18:5-6.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 178.

Mercy and justice

13. How is the mercy of the Lord shown? 2 Peter 3:9; Hebrews 4:16.

NOTE: 'Peter kept alive in his heart the hope of Christ's return, and he assured the church of the certain fulfilment of the Saviour's promise, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." John 14:3. To the tried and faithful ones the coming might seem long delayed, but the apostle assured them: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 536.

14. How does God show His justice against sin, scoffers, pride and rebellion? 2 Peter 3:10.

NOTE: "'Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.'" "The indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and His fury upon all their armies: He hath utterly destroyed them, He hath delivered them to the slaughter." "Upon the wicked He shall rain quick burning coals, fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." Isaiah 9:5; 34:2; Psalm 11:6, margin. Fire comes down from God out of heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. Malachi 4:1; 2 Peter 3:10. The earth's surface seems one molten mass, a vast, seething lake of fire. It is the time of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men, "the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion." Isaiah 34:8. The wicked receive their recompense in the earth. Proverbs 11:31. They "shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts." . . . Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. For six thousand years he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe and causing grief throughout the universe. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain. Now God's creatures are forever delivered from his presence and temptations. "The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they [the righteous] break forth into singing." Isaiah 14:7. And a shout of praise and triumph ascends from the whole loyal universe. "The voice of a great multitude," "as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings" is heard, saying: "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Revelation 19:6. *Darkness Before Dawn*, pages 59-60.