

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

**Second Quarter 2016:** *The Book of Matthew*

### Lesson 7 “Lord of Jews and Gentiles”

#### Read for this week’s study

Matthew 14:1–21; Exodus 3:14; Matthew 14:22–33; Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:1–20; Matthew 15:21–28.

#### Memory Text

“ ‘I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles’ ” (Isaiah 42:6, NIV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Feeding the Hungry
- III. Lord of All Creation
- IV. The Hypocrite’s Heart
- V. Crumbs From the Table
- VI. Lord of The Gentiles
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “Christ’s ministry, the years in the flesh, was directed mostly toward the nation of Israel. But, as the whole Bible shows, Israel wasn’t the only people God cared about. The reason God chose Israel was so that He could bless all people on earth: Isaiah 42:5–7, NIV. It was through Israel, or more specifically from the Messiah who would arise from Israel, that God would reach out to the whole world. This week we’ll see a little more of the Lord’s outreach to all in need of salvation.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Who is the memory text (and the whole passage Isaiah 42:1-6) about? What are the implications of this? How does that fit into God’s story, the call and purpose of Israel and the Exodus?
3. “Read Matthew 14:1–21. What happened right before the miraculous feeding, and what role might that event have played in what followed?” (Sunday’s lesson)
4. Jesus had just lost John, his cousin and colleague. And the way He lost him must have warned Jesus of what lay ahead for him, too. He slips away to be alone in a quiet place. Yet the crowds discover him and press around him. His reaction is not one of anger or frustration, just compassion. He translates his sorrow over John and

perhaps his sorrow over himself, into sorrow for them. Jesus transforms his own feelings into love and service for those in need. What a lesson for us when we are sad and disappointed when life takes unexpected turns.

5. “Scripture time and again has the Lord in control of all nature. Psalm 104, for example, clearly shows that God is not only the Creator but also the Sustainer, and that it’s through His power that the world continues to exist and that the laws of nature operate.” (Monday’s lesson)
6. What is the significance of this event where Jesus demonstrates his power over nature, thus acting as a second Adam? Walking on water (in the literal sense) was not something the early Christians expected to do themselves. Paul, facing a shipwreck, did not consider getting out of the boat and strolling off to the shore as a viable option. What is the significance of this for our understanding of where we are in the story and the fact that God has not restored this part of dominion over nature to us yet? If other parts of the original curse have been reversed, why not this one?
7. “Jesus’ disciples weren’t bothering with washing their hands in a certain way and thus following this regulation, and when the scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem pointed it out, Jesus responded as He did. In short, Jesus strongly condemns what’s so easily a trap for anyone: hypocrisy.” (Tuesday’s lesson)
8. It is interesting that Jesus does not answer the Pharisees’ accusation, but He launches a counter-attack. He says that their traditions had had the effect of overturning something far more important—namely Scripture itself. Is it possible that we might in the name of tradition be opposing something today, but find that our opposition is a position which actually is against God and His foundational values? If yes, what might that be?
9. Jesus calls the Pharisees ‘hypocrites’ i.e. play-actors. Hypocrite literally means someone who puts on a mask to play a part. Jesus says that the words that Pharisees use are the mask. Behind their words of piety, their hearts have no intention of really discovering what God desired and/or meant. Did this tendency die out with the first century Pharisees? Or is it possible that we also might be more interested in safeguarding the traditional words and concepts than discovering God’s true intention or meaning?
10. Is it possible that the church that started as a re-thinking movement is nowadays more interested in replicating itself and its traditions? If yes, how did that happen? What is the solution for this malady? Are there any “traditions” that need to be challenged today?
11. Why does serious study of the Scriptures remain at the heart of the church’s life and task? How do we distinguish between healthy and oppressive/hypocritical traditions, between life-giving innovations and deadly tradition?
12. The lesson ends with the story of the Canaanite woman and the feeding of the four thousand. Why are we told of another feeding if we just had one in chapter 14?

13. “Many people don’t realize that there are two feedings of the multitudes in the Gospels: the first for the Jews, the second for the Gentiles. In both instances, Jesus has “compassion” for the people. It’s amazing, this image of thousands of Gentiles coming out to be taught, loved, and fed by this young Rabbi. Today, looking back and understanding the universality of the gospel (after all most people reading this right now are not Jews), we can easily miss just how incredible and unexpected something like this must have appeared to the people, both to the Jews and to the Gentiles. No question, Jesus was surely taking everyone out of their comfort zones.” (Thursday’s lesson)
14. In what ways do we need to follow the universality of the gospel and get out of our comfort zones today? Or did Jesus encourage it only then and not now?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Did Jesus base his authority on his claims? No, he inspired the warning against accepting mere claims. When John inquired if he really was the Messiah, Jesus didn’t just say, “Yes, I am.” He offered evidence to John.

Did he base his authority on miracles or show of power? No, it was Jesus who inspired the warning, “Don’t trust miracles if they are not associated with the truth.” In fact, he even turned the crowds away when they were following him for the miraculous food and the miraculous healing.

How Jesus must have been tempted to use his power when he was winning so few. He knew the people were expecting a Messiah who would come with great physical power to drive off their enemies and establish an earthly kingdom. But he wouldn’t do it. It would have misrepresented the truth and God’s way of exercising his authority. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #7, “The Question of Authority” recorded February, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/7MMCAG>*

Did Jesus’ authority rest upon his miracles and his show of power? He performed many miracles, but when he began developing large crowds just because of miracles alone he dismissed them. You remember the crowds got bigger and bigger as he began handing out the free food and the free medicine. You can always get a big crowd for that, and they thought boy, this is really it, socialized medicine and free food. And Jesus did not want them to follow him for this. You see, they were quick to believe what a wonderful messiah he’d make because when he leads us to fight against the Romans we won’t even have to carry along provisions. He can miraculously feed us all the time. And when we get wounded in battle he can heal us. Oh, they thought, we’ve really got a good messiah here. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio

series, Understanding the Mission of the Church, #5, recorded September, 1983, Camp AuSable, Michigan} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/5MMUTMOTC>*

Lou: Can you say just a word on this question that has come up about prayers that God says he won't hear? For example, in Isaiah 1:15, "You spread forth your hands. I will hide my eyes from you. Even though you make many prayers, I will not listen." What kind of prayers does God refuse to hear?

Graham: Ah, that's most significant. In I John it says a similar thing, the prayer of hypocrisy, the prayer that really isn't asking for any help, the prayer that is cheating with God. What else can God do? He loves the cheater; he loves the hypocrite. He simply cannot help them, and so he says, "I will have to give you up." So prayer must be honest. We must walk humbly with our God and tell the truth. Same way with a physician—a physician cannot help a cheating patient who won't tell the truth, and God is the same. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #15 with Lou Venden, "Talking to God As A Friend" recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/15MMCAG>*

Now these are the ones Jesus calls hypocrites. Hypocrite is not a bad word. In ancient times, a hypocrite was an actor. Hupa, which turns into English hypo, means under, and the second half of the word hypocrite, means a mask. See, an actor is a person who performs under a mask. Well, a good actor—nothing wrong with that. But when a person pretends to be pious and inside he's a cheat and a liar, then he's a fraud, he's an acting saint. And look at what Jesus said about hypocrites who practice their piety just as a mask. Ellen White says in one stunning place, "Pretentious piety is nauseating to the Lord. It makes him sick."

So the universe looks down at these who have known the truth about God. God especially revealed himself to them. People who've been privileged to have Moses live among them, and Abraham live among them, and Daniel and people like this, really trustworthy friends. And the universe notices that they not only are untrustworthy representatives of God, but these Gentiles in chapter 1, even blaspheme and mock the God of these people who claim to be God's spokesmen. Verse 24:

"The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of their pretentious piety and fraudulent worship of you who profess to be His people." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series Romans, chapter 7, recorded November, 1977, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/13MMROMANS66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/14MMROMANS66> (Part 2)

### Further Study with Ellen White

The gospel invitation is not to be narrowed down and presented only to a select few, who, we suppose, will do us honor if they accept it. The message is to be given to all. When God blesses His children, it is not alone for their own sake, but for the world's sake. As He bestows His gifts on us, it is that we may multiply them by imparting. {MH 102.1}

The message is to be given to all. Wherever hearts are open to receive the truth, Christ is ready to instruct them. He reveals to them the Father, and the worship acceptable to Him who reads the heart. For such He uses no parables. To them, as to the woman at the well, He says, "I that speak unto thee am He." {DA 194.2}

The truth is all powerful and far reaching. It will unite nationalities in one great brotherhood. . . . Christ in men unites them on one grand platform, preparing for the uniting in one family in heaven. It is the truth that makes men one and removes national prejudice. . . . {OHC 171.4}

The blessings of salvation are for every soul. Nothing but his own choice can prevent any man from becoming a partaker of the promise in Christ by the gospel. {DA 403.2}

The Lord God through Christ holds out His hand all the day long in invitations to the needy. He will receive all. He welcomes all. He rejects none. It is His glory to pardon the chief of sinners. He will take the prey from the mighty, He will deliver the captive, He will pluck the brand from the burning. He will lower the golden chain of His mercy to the greatest depths of human wretchedness and guilt and lift up the debased soul contaminated with sin. But man must will to come, and cooperate in the work of saving his soul by availing himself of opportunities given him of God. The Lord forces no one. {TMK 235.2}

No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognized by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple courts, that every soul may have free access to God. His love is so broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of Satan's influence those who have been deluded by his deceptions, and places them within reach of the throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. {PK 369.3}

The Saviour's words, "Ye are the light of the world," point to the fact that He has committed to His followers a world-wide mission. In the days of Christ, selfishness and pride and prejudice had built strong and high the wall of partition between the appointed guardians of the sacred oracles and every other nation on the globe. But the Saviour had come to change all this. The words which the people were hearing from His lips were unlike anything to which they had ever listened from priest or rabbi. Christ tears away the wall of partition, the self-love, the dividing prejudice of nationality, and teaches a love for all the human family. He lifts men from the

narrow circle that their selfishness prescribes; He abolishes all territorial lines and artificial distinctions of society. He makes no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. He teaches us to look upon every needy soul as our neighbor and the world as our field. {MB 42.2}

He [Christ] passed by no human being as worthless, but sought to apply the healing remedy to every soul. In whatever company He found Himself He presented a lesson appropriate to the time and the circumstances. Every neglect or insult shown by men to their fellowmen only made Him more conscious of their need of His divine-human sympathy. He sought to inspire with hope the roughest and most unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might become blameless and harmless, attaining such a character as would make them manifest as the children of God. . . . {LHU 183.2}

Though He was a Jew, Jesus mingled freely with the Samaritans, setting at nought the Pharisaic customs of His nation. In face of their prejudices He accepted the hospitality of this despised people. He slept with them under their roofs, ate with them at their tables—partaking of the food prepared and served by their hands—taught in their streets, and treated them with the utmost kindness and courtesy. And while He drew their hearts to Him by the tie of human sympathy, His divine grace brought to them the salvation which the Jews rejected. {LHU 183.3}

The parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son, bring out in distinct lines God's pitying love for those who are straying from Him. Although they have turned away from God, He does not leave them in their misery. He is full of kindness and tender pity toward all who are exposed to the temptations of the artful foe. {COL 198.1}

When Philip came to Jesus with the request, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," the Saviour answered him: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" Christ declares Himself to be sent into the world as a representative of the Father. In His nobility of character, in His mercy and tender pity, in His love and goodness, He stands before us as the embodiment of divine perfection, the image of the invisible God. {5T 739.1}

God saw that a clearer revelation than nature was needed to portray both His personality and His character. He sent His Son into the world to manifest, so far as could be endured by human sight, the nature and the attributes of the invisible God. {MH 419.4}

Through the accumulated misrepresentations of the enemy, many were so deceived that they worshiped a false god, clothed with the attributes of the satanic character. {RH, November 17, 1891 par. 6}