

Glimpses of Our God Lesson 7 1Q 2012

The Lord of the Sabbath

Read memory text -thoughts?

What do you understand it to mean that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath?

Have you ever felt like it was the other way around?

If the Sabbath was made for man was it in existence before man?

Does this add further clarification to our discussion last week of the 10 Commandments being codification of the law of love that was added for human need?

Why was the Sabbath needed when man was created but not before?

Why will the Sabbath be celebrated in the new earth?

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, "One of the most..."

In what condition was man when the Sabbath was made?

What do you think the purpose of the Sabbath was in Eden?

Did the purpose of the Sabbath change after sin? If so how?

What do you understand it to mean, the Sabbath was "made" holy? Do you understand it to mean the Sabbath was made holy in its construction, the built into it is holiness? As in man was "made" perfect? Or simply God declared it holy so it is holy?

The lesson states, “With the Sabbath, then, we’re dealing with one of the most fundamental and foundational of all biblical truths.”

What is that fundamental and foundational truth?

- That the Sabbath is Saturday the seventh day?
- That the Sabbath is holy?
- Or, is it what makes the Sabbath holy that is foundational and fundamental, and what the Sabbath reveals about God’s character that is foundational and fundamental?

And what is that foundational and fundamental truth about God’s character, which the Sabbath reveals?

Read next paragraph, “God created a day...” thoughts?

What does it mean the Sabbath was set apart for holy uses?

- Are all the other days set apart for unholy uses?
- In Eden, before sin, were any unholy activities being done by Adam and Eve?
- In its original creation what does this mean?
- Does it mean a special time set aside to spend with God? Didn’t He come and spend time with them in the cool of every day?
- Are we introjecting some idea into our understanding of the Sabbath because of the perspective of our sinful minds?

What do you think about this portion of paragraph two, “How fascinating that God Himself rested on the seventh day.

Whatever that means, it shows how seriously the day is meant to be taken, because God Himself rested on it!”?

What does it mean God rested? Did He stop working? One Bible Commentary states the following:

Jesus stated to them that the work of relieving the afflicted was in harmony with the Sabbath law. It was in harmony with the **work of God's angels**, who are ever descending and ascending between heaven and earth to minister to suffering humanity. Jesus declared, "**My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.**" **All days are God's, in which to carry out His plans for the human race.** If the Jews' interpretation of the law was correct, then Jehovah was at fault, **whose work has quickened and upheld every living thing since first He laid the foundations of the earth;** then He who pronounced His work good, and instituted the Sabbath to commemorate its completion, **must put a period to His labor, and stop the never-ending routine of the universe.** {DA 206.3}

Should God forbid the sun to perform its office upon the Sabbath, cut off its genial rays from warming the earth and nourishing vegetation? Must the system of worlds stand still through that holy day? Should He command the brooks to stay from watering the fields and forests, and bid the waves of the sea still their ceaseless ebbing and flowing? Must the wheat and corn stop growing, and the ripening cluster defer its purple bloom? Must the trees and flowers put forth no bud nor blossom on the Sabbath? {DA 206.4}

In such a case, men would miss the fruits of the earth, and the blessings that make life desirable. Nature must continue her unvarying course. **God could not for a moment stay His hand, or man would faint and die. And man also has a work to perform on this day. The necessities of life must be attended to, the sick must be cared for, the wants of the needy must be supplied. He will not be held guiltless who neglects to relieve suffering on the Sabbath.** God's holy rest day was made for man, and acts of mercy are in perfect harmony with its intent. God does not desire His creatures to suffer an hour's pain that may be relieved upon the Sabbath or any other day. {DA 207.1}

So what does it mean God rested? Did God stop working?

If God did not stop working, then what kind of rest did God do on the Sabbath? He stopped creating on planet earth. And why, after this creation week, did He announce a day of rest? What purpose would such a day serve?

What was happening in the universe? Who was watching as God created planet earth and all life on it?

God rested His presentation of evidence of His character of love and His law upon which life is built.

Consider this world, teeming with life, and everything operating perfectly upon God's law of love, ministering to another, life unto life. What a beautiful lesson book to reveal God's methods, principles and character. And the Sabbath, God rested, and we learn more of His character – He gives real freedom to His creatures to think for themselves. He doesn't coerce or pressure.

Satan hates this day. He doesn't want people to remember how God built planet earth to operate. He has infected earth with his principle of survival of the fittest. He doesn't want people stopping their drive to survive, to rest in trust with God and reflect on His original creation, His methods, His principles of love and what it means that God leaves us free, even His enemies free.

Satan doesn't mind if we keep the seventh day Sabbath, as long as we do it as an arbitrary test of obedience. Then the Sabbath, rather than revealing God's design, methods, and character, instead supports Satan's allegations against God. And with that idea of Sabbath we can kill the Creator and want Him off the Cross so we can keep what the law "requires."

MONDAY

The lesson breaks down the Sabbath commandment of Exodus into various parts – read starting “This commandment is also...”

Thoughts?

Would you say that it is sin, a violation of the commandment, to do secular work on Sabbath?

We have the command, thou shall do no work –

But what about the other express command – Six days thou shall labor and work and do all thy work?

If it is a sin to labor and work on the Sabbath, because the commandment gives us an express command, then is it a sin **not** to labor and work the other six days of the week because we also have an express command?

Did God give Adam and Eve work to do in the Garden before sin?

Are we designed to be active, to work productively? What happens when we stop working? We lose physical health, we age faster, our brains deteriorate, we lose self-respect, confidence, and our development ceases; we slowly die.

It is part of God’s design that we are active, engaged, working with our energy to give of ourselves in usefulness.

- So, is it “sin” to retire and quit working? (I don’t mean quite earning a paycheck, but to quit useful expenditure of your energy in some productive action?)
- Is it sin to take state welfare or charity when one is capable of working and has opportunity to work?

- Is it sin to live off your parents, or inheritance when one is capable of working?
- Is it sin to stand on the street corner with a sign, will work for food, and then refuse to work when someone gives an opportunity?

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, **we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle** and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. **We were not idle when we were with you, ⁸ nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. ⁹** We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, **we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."**

¹¹ **We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. ¹² Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. ¹³ And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.** 2 Thes 3:6-13

Is it sin, not to be usefully engaged in work of some kind, irrespective of whether it gains a paycheck if one is capable?

- What is your reaction to, on the Sabbath, going to work, working for self to make money on the Sabbath?
- What is your reaction to not working the other days?

Do we dishonor God with both? How?

We were made in God's image – to reveal His character, to be an example to angels and the world. Resting on Sabbath demonstrates our confidence and trust in God, celebrates His nature, character and principles of truth, presented in love, leaving others free. Working the other six days demonstrates the constant care, regard, and interest in usefulness, using

one's energies to bless, assist, be productive, and be a giver, rather than be a burden and require others to care for you.

Earthly kings expect to be waited on and served by others, God serves and gives of Himself for others. And Christ came to serve and not be served, and we are to live as Christ lived!

Thoughts?

TUESDAY

Read, starting in the second paragraph, "The Sabbath, on a purely practical level, offered servants some protection from the master who would work them nonstop – a protection built right into a commandment that had its origins in Creation itself." and then read the third paragraph "Of course..."

Thoughts?

Did God change His law after sin? What does it mean this element was added?

Was an element added? No! The Sabbath did not change. It is holy because it is evidence of God's character of truth, love and freedom. The explanation is just another way to state the same truth about the Sabbath – the God of truth, love and freedom made man in His image, not for slavery, delivering people from slavery is an expression of God's character of love, and the principles of freedom already inherent in the Sabbath.

Because of their personal experience with being slaves, using this meaning was designed to help them have a better appreciation for the true nature of the Sabbath. Unfortunately, rather than becoming a day filled with truth, love and freedom, the Jews burdened the Sabbath to become the day which most enslaved them.

See WEDNESDAY

Middle of the lesson it asks, "What is the context of the healing, why would Jesus have done it specifically on that day, and what is the major point that He is clearly making?"

From the Desire of Ages page 206:

Jesus had come to "magnify the law, and make it honorable." He was not to lessen its dignity, but to exalt it. The scripture says, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth." Isaiah 42:21, 4. **He had come to free the Sabbath from those burdensome requirements that had made it a curse instead of a blessing.** {DA 206.1}

For this reason He had chosen the Sabbath upon which to perform the act of healing at Bethesda. He could have healed the sick man as well on any other day of the week; or He might simply have cured him, without bidding him bear away his bed. **But this would not have given Him the opportunity He desired.** A wise purpose underlay every act of Christ's life on earth. Everything He did was important in itself and in its teaching. Among the afflicted ones at the pool He selected the worst case upon whom to exercise His healing power, and bade the man carry his bed through the city in order to publish the great work that had been wrought upon him. This would raise the question of what it was lawful to do on the Sabbath, and **would open the way for Him to denounce the restrictions of the Jews in regard to the Lord's day, and to declare their traditions void.** {DA 206.2}

Why did Christ heal on Sabbath? To remove restrictions to the freedoms we are to experience on Sabbath.

Do we suffer with any human restrictions that make the Sabbath a burden and need to be removed?

A listener online sent in the following:

Currently my church is having an issue with getting musicians to play for our services on Sabbath. We have musicians in the congregation that play but they want someone of a certain caliber to work with the various choirs that we have and sometimes those of that caliber are not Adventists even though they are Christians, well some are. Some of these persons wear jewelry and members have an issue with that plus they are paid to play on a Sabbath.

A friend of mine recently returned from Atlanta where he was paid handsomely to play on Sabbath in various churches there, so well was he paid that he didn't have to work during the week.

So, should musicians be paid to perform in church on Sabbath?

Should the church “hire” people to play for the services? Or is it okay, permissible, acceptable, honorable to pay musicians to play in church on Sabbath?

Should the church “hire” people to speak for the services or should pastors all be non-paid persons so as not to do any paid work on the Sabbath?

What about musicians? If we call the worship leaders is it okay?

What about members of the choir?

All the Levites who were musicians—Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun and their sons and relatives—stood on the east side of the altar, dressed in fine linen and playing cymbals, harps and lyres. They were accompanied by 120 priests sounding trumpets. ¹³ The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise

to the LORD and sang:

“He is good;
his love endures forever.” 2Chron 5:12,13

How did the Levites get income? They were paid 1/10 of the tithe as their income. And what was their job?

Should persons be paid to participate in the worship service?

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “Jesus, through His Sabbath...” well said!

What do you hear in this paragraph? What is the lesson for us today?

The next sentence says, “For Jesus, the Sabbath was more about people than about rules...” thoughts?

In your life is Sabbath more about people or rules?

As parents how do we make the Sabbath about people and not about rules?

Growing up has the Sabbath ever had rules that made it a burden rather than a celebration of God’s love?

FRIDAY

Read top two paragraphs – thoughts? Does this mean just relieving physical suffering, or mental and emotional suffering too?

Does this make it harder to determine what is appropriate to do on the Sabbath, or is all behavior that helps another, all altruistic, benevolent, ministering “work” that doesn’t profit self okay on Sabbath?

If we avoid such ministry in order to “rest” on the Sabbath are we being selfish?

Read and discuss question 1

What does it mean “And they certainly will be judged for their actions”?

- Does it mean that we will look at the history of their lives and draw lessons, make judgments, that will help us live better lives?
- Does it mean they will be legally judged and punitively punished for their actions?
- Or something else?

What does the scripture say?

“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. ³⁴ You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵ The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. ³⁶ But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. ³⁷ For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.” MT 12:33-37

What does this mean? Is it not saying your condition itself will be the determining factor in the judgment? In other words the judgment only accurately diagnosis the condition of one’s character.

What do you think about the latter part of someone coming along claiming light which contradicts tradition? How should we handle it?