



The Least of These Lesson 3 3Q 2019

Sabbath: A Day of Freedom

by Tim Jennings (announcements on last page)

SABBATH

What do you think of the title of the lesson? Throughout your life have you always thought—“Sabbath: A Day of Freedom!”

Why or why not?

If the Sabbath is a rule imposed by God that we are required to keep on threat of punishment—how is it a day of freedom?

Can you get more freedom by imposing more rules?

Was the Sabbath in existence before the earth was made?

If not, then did the angels have freedom without this day of freedom?

If it was not needed for the angels in heaven prior to the creation of earth, why is the Sabbath needed now and for eternity future?

The memory verse is Jesus words, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.”
Mark 2:27

What does this mean?

If I said, the YMCA was made for people, people were not made for the YMCA—what would you understand that to mean?

- What happens if people utilize the YMCA?
- What happens if people do not use the YMCA?

Is this what Jesus meant about the Sabbath?

Is the Sabbath for us to use in some way—some type of resource that is built by God for impact us for good in some way if we utilize it?



What is the purpose of the Sabbath? Why was it given? It was made for man for what reason?

The Commandment says, “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.” (Ex 20:8)

If we were to build a golden calf and have an orgy of pagan worship during the Sabbath hours, have we made the Sabbath less holy? If we spent the Sabbath hours in total righteous living, would we make the Sabbath more holy? We cannot keep the Sabbath holy, for we didn’t make it holy and we can’t make it unholy—we can only keep ourselves holy. And can a person keep themselves holy only one day in seven?

The Sabbath was made for man—for what reason?

To aide humankind in holiness—in keeping ourselves holy! And what is holiness? Holiness is the state of being holy, which is being in harmony with God in all aspects of our being. Thus, being holy is living in harmony with God’s character, protocols, methods—His design-laws! And how is the Sabbath related to this?

Consider this quotation from EG White, founder of the SDA church:

The Sabbath was given to all humankind to commemorate the work of creation. . . God sanctified and blessed the day in which He had rested from all His wondrous work. And this Sabbath, sanctified of God, was to be kept for a perpetual covenant. It was a memorial that was to stand from age to age, till the close of earth’s history. . . . {CTr 355.2}

Every person has been placed on trial, as were Adam and Eve in Eden. As the tree of knowledge was placed in the midst of the Garden of Eden, so the Sabbath command is placed in the midst of the Decalogue. In regard to the fruit of the tree of knowledge, the restriction was made, Ye shall not eat of it . . . lest ye die. Of the Sabbath, God said, Ye shall not defile it, but keep it holy. . . . **As the tree of knowledge was the test of Adam’s obedience, so the fourth command is the test that God has given to prove the loyalty of all His people...**—Review and Herald, Aug. 30, 1898. {CTr 355.5}

What do you hear? What law lens to you understand these words through?

First—do you see Sabbath had a beginning—there was a time when it did not exist—but God’s eternal law of love did existed before the Sabbath. The Sabbath was created, made for man as the memory verse says—made, why? What was its purpose?



To aide us in holiness, in keeping ourselves holy—how? Do you hear this idea of aiding us in holiness in the quote above about the Sabbath being like the Tree of Knowledge both being a test? Or do you hear rules, legal requirements, fear?

Consider this quote

God might have created man without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; but in that case man would have been, **not a free moral agent, but a mere automaton. Without freedom of choice, his obedience would not have been voluntary**, but forced. **There could have been no development of character...** It would have been unworthy of man as an intelligent being, and would have sustained Satan's charge of God's arbitrary rule. E.G. White, Conflict and Courage 33

Is this describing a test, a trial, what kind of test, what kind of trial? Is it a legal issue, or is it an issue of exercise, the law of exertion, the actual development of one's abilities? God giving Adam and Eve something to choose, to make a choice, to exercise their individuality over—which would develop them.

Did Adam and Eve have the ability—in their own God given strength, to resist Satan's temptation and develop a perfect sinless and loyal character? Yes!

Do we? No—so what are we being tested on if we can't make a choice to develop perfect character?

We are being tested to exercise our choice to TRUST Jesus, to “come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give your *rest!*” We are to rest from trying to save ourselves, from living in fear, including fear of eternal loss because we trust Jesus and the Sabbath is a day where we can each week, rest—not just from employment but from the fears of life. We can exercise our ability to think, reflect, celebrate and spend time with God—realizing the true meaning—the evidence of what the Sabbath reveals.

We are changed by our choices—not just behavioral choices but what we choose to believe—believe a lie and it changes you, neurobiologically and characterologically. But the truth sets free, when we choose to believe and live the truth we are changed. God cannot choose the truth for us, we must choose it and in this choice we participate with God—the Spirit of truth for our healing and restoration. Thus, the Sabbath is a resource, a bastion of heavenly truth we can ingest and experience God's healing power to make us holy. So what is the special evidence or truth contained in the Sabbath?

What does it say about God? This is the key!



The Sabbath was given in a time of war—what kind of war?

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. (Rev 12:7-9, emphasis supplied)

The Greek word translated war is πόλεμος [polemos/pol·em·os], from which we get polemic—it is a war of words, a war of ideas. And Satan is the father of lies (see Jn 8:44). What has been the focus or target of Satan’s lies and where is this war fought?

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”(2Cor 10:3-5, emphasis supplied)

The war is over the truth about God—whether we can trust God and whether He is worthy of our love, devotion, loyalty. God wants our love, trust, loyalty and devotion, but can any being get this from another by threat, coercion, or infliction of punishment?

In fact, what happens to love, trust, loyalty and devotion when one threatens and coerces another? Love and trust are broken and rebellion ensues.

So, if Satan could get intelligent beings to believe that God is coercive, threatening, the source of inflicted pain, suffering, torture and death, then love and trust would break down and rebellion against God ensue.

How could Satan get intelligent beings to conclude this about God?

By alleging that God’s laws are not the design-protocols the Creator built life to operate upon, but instead function no differently than the rules enacted by human beings—imperial-laws that require the ruling authority to inflict punishment for disobedience. Then how does the Sabbath fit in?

What does it say about God, that in the context of an assault on His right to rule, rather than using His power to force all beings to bow to Him, He creates a day of freedom to think?



On days one-through-six of creation week we learn that God has incredible power, but God doesn't want His intelligent creatures to be intimidated, to be afraid, to follow Him because of power. God wants His creatures to love Him, trust Him, and be devoted to Him in loyal admiration.

Thus, after six days of creation, God created a day of freedom, a day where God stopped using power and stepped back, giving His creatures space and time to consider and think. Day seven reveals the character of the One who wields the power: God presented evidence (truth) in love, while leaving His creatures free to decide for themselves. No coercion, no intimidation, no pressure—freedom!

Then what is the purpose of the Sabbath commandment? It is a reminder of the gift (the Sabbath) God has given us to aide humanity in keeping ourselves holy—how one lives their life—in harmony with God and His design for life. Do we present truth in love and leave others free, or do we use imperial rules and coerce others with threats of punishment? Do we live in trust to God, trusting Him with our lives so much that we do not shrink from death (Rev 12:11)?

All week long we are to Remember the Sabbath to keep ourselves holy. We are to be beings who present truth in love while leaving others free. Only those who practice these principles of God in their lives are true Sabbath-keepers. Those who crucified Christ had the right day of the week but did not have God's principles written into their characters. They were not Sabbath-keepers. And Christians who would use the government to coerce others consciences are also not Sabbath-keepers regardless of the religious morals they are legislating.

With this in mind, we realize that God is Creator and His laws are the protocols upon which all life is built to operate. As the Creator of time, God built into time a day for human health, holiness, growth, development; a day of evidence to reveal truth about how God governs. Every seven days, every human being passes through this day—this reminder, this piece of evidence, this opportunity for healing, growth, renewal, transformation, contemplation, and freedom from the lies about God.

We can only experience these blessings if we throw off the lies about God and His law and accept His design protocols for life. But if we insist on viewing the Sabbath as an “arbitrary test of obedience”—a rule enacted by a powerful potentate who is watching to see if we break his rule—then the Sabbath becomes, not a sign of godliness, but a mark of beastliness.

The historic two days of worship within Christianity—Sabbath and Sunday—stand as two banners, signs, flags, marks, pennants that represent two divergent systems of governing.

Just as the US flag—the grand old Stars and Stripes—is a symbol or sign of the United States of America, so these two days of worship are signs of two different systems of governing. However, the flag is not the reality for which it stands. The US flag is only a symbol of the USA. And a person can wave the flag of America while being an enemy of the US. During WWII, German soldiers donned



American uniforms with the US flag and infiltrated American lines to sow discord and disrupt the US war effort. And there were people in Germany wearing the Nazi uniform who were working for the allies to undermine the German war effort.

Just because someone waves the flag doesn't mean that they support what the flag actually stands for.

Likewise, Sabbath and Sunday are signs of two different systems of governing. **The Sabbath is a day of rest by its creation:** it was **made** by God for this purpose at the end of creation week. The Sabbath is an evidence of design-law—truth, presented in love while leaving others free—and is a sign of God's method of governing. **Sunday, however, became a day of rest by legislative action,** by human authorities making rules. Therefore, Sunday is a mark of imperialism—of law and government that functions like sinful humans who impose rules that require infliction of punishment for disobedience.

These two days of worship, whose significance was established by their origins, are just like the US flag—symbols, signs, marks—but they are not the governments they represent. So, a person could be a Sabbath-keeper but practice the imposed-law model and teach that Sabbath-breaking requires God to inflict punishment on the violator of the law. That person would be like the German soldiers wearing the US flag, infiltrating God's church to sow discord and confusion. They would not be on God's team, and would actually be promoting the methods of the beast. These religious traitors to God's kingdom would be most powerfully exemplified by the Sabbath-keepers who crucified the Lord of the Sabbath. Conversely, a person who worships on Sunday but promotes truth in love while leaving others free is promoting the principles of the Sabbath and is on God's team.

The real question is, Who do we understand God to be:

- Creator/Designer whose laws are the protocols upon which life is built and who created the Sabbath for our spiritual health, or
- an imperial dictator who makes up rules and then enforces those rules with threats of punishment—just like the church of the Dark Ages did for those who violated her Sunday?

SUNDAY

The lesson takes us to Exodus 16 in which the children of Israel having come out of Egypt are given manna, which had to be collected every day, but on Friday a double portion came and they collected the amount for Sabbath also.

The lesson wants us to know that by doing this God was demonstrating the importance of Sabbath and establishing which day of the 7 days is the Sabbath and the Jewish people have been observing that same weekly Sabbath generation after generation since that time.



This is an important point for anyone who questions whether we can know which day of the week is the Bible Sabbath—some will argue, we don't know because of changes in calendar etc. However, the fact the Jewish people have been keeping it perpetually since God had them rest from collecting manna every Sabbath for forty years, lets us know which day of the week it is. Further, Jesus kept this day, and all Christians understand it when asked, upon which day of the week did Jesus rise from the dead? All know it was a Sunday, the first day of the week, and the Bible says He rested in the tomb over the Sabbath. So what day of the week is the Bible Sabbath is not in question—the question is about whether it matters or not and what is the significance of changing it.

What is the significance of changing the day Christians believe to be God's holy day?

And the fact it was changed is also not up for debate, Adventists and non-Adventists alike all acknowledge the New Testament and early church observed the Bible Sabbath from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset and it wasn't changed to Sunday until several hundred years after Christ. So the fact it was changed is not up for debate, the question is what does it signify, what is it evidence of?

Why do church committees not vote that on bad smog days their members are not required to breathe? Because they cannot change design laws and they know it—so what is evidenced by changing the Sabbath? That Christians do not view God's law as design law, but merely as a system of imposed rules like we humans make that are subject to change.

So, the real change in the law was first the idea that God governs like humans govern, with imposed law, and then **the evidence** of that change in thinking was the change in the day of worship. Christians shifted from worshipping the Creator to worshipping the dictator—and looked what happened in history.

- How did the New Testament Christians live and treat others?
- How did the first and second century Christians treat others and live?
- After Constantine and the change in the way Christians viewed law, from design law which leads them to a God who heals and transforms their hearts, to imperial law which leads them to a punishing god from whom they need to propitiate with a sacrifice in order to be legally pardoned—how did Christians live and treat others?
 - The Dark Ages
 - Crusades
 - Inquisitions
 - Coercion—burning people at the stake, torture
 - Enforced religious observance
 - Indulgences—payment to expiate sin
 - Various works—penances and pilgrimages to earn merit with their god



So, the Jews in Christ's day who kept the Sabbath as a legal requirement, and would not help sick people upon it, were not Sabbath keepers, they were Sabbath breakers because they represented the day to be an imposed rule, and thus God to be an imperial dictator. They had the right day, but they accepted the wrong law and thus the wrong god and crucified the Creator to keep their holy day.

Adventists who present the Sabbath as an arbitrary test of obedience, a day in which God has set up a rule and we must keep it or He will be required to punish us, are like the Jews 2000 years ago—they have the right day, but have the wrong law and the wrong god—and are not spreading the 3 Angels Message, but perpetuating the system of the beast.

The message of the 3 Angels of Revelation 14 is to call people to worship “him who made the heavens, earth, sea and fountains of water...” meaning Creator worship, which requires we return to seeing and understanding reality through design law.

But, I want to ask what is the deeper meaning of the symbolism of the manna?

What does the manna represent?

Jesus said that He was the bread that came down out of heaven—referring specifically to the manna.

So they asked him, “What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

“Sir,” they said, “from now on give us this bread.”

Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. John 6:30-35 NIV84

God created six days and rested, God gave manna six days and rested—why? What is God wanting people to experience and understand?

What does God want from us? Love, trust, loyalty, devotion—how is this achieved?



Not by might nor by power but by the Spirit says the Lord, Zech 4:6, and how does the Spirit work? Truth and Love while leaving each person free—so how does this apply to Sabbath?

God works to give evidence, blessings, which are manifestations of power—creation and manna—but does God want us to worship Him simply because He is powerful? So, what does God do—He gives us freedom to think, to reflect, to comprehend, to reason.

Jesus came and lived a sinless life, and then during crucifixion week gave perfect evidence of His character of love, and then rested on the Sabbath giving all beings who watched time to reflect and think for themselves over the Sabbath. Truth, presented in love, leaving people free to think.

This is the beauty of the Sabbath, God stepping back and restraining His use of power, ceasing His use of power to give us the space and freedom to think for ourselves without intimidation, pressure etc. but to appreciate the blessings God has given.

MONDAY

The lesson points out that the 10 Commandments were given twice and that the Sabbath Commandment was slightly different with two reasons for it:

- The first set because God is Creator
- The second because God delivered them from slavery.

The lesson points out that God did it this way to emphasize that God is our Creator and Redeemer.

No, doubt that God is our Creator and Redeemer, but why do you think God didn't have both reasons written into the first set if that was His purpose?

Couldn't God have written the first set to say, "for in six days the Lord created the heaven...and brought you out of Egypt..."

If the primary intention was to have the Sabbath associated with both Creation and Redemption, why not put both reasons in the first set and just duplicate it like the other 9 in the second set? Was God depending on Israel to worship a golden calf and Moses to destroy the first set in order for God to be enabled to give His two reasons for the Sabbath? In other words, if Israel would not have worshipped the golden calf would God have said, "Oh my, I wanted them to know another reason and I missed my chance?"

Could the fact that there is a difference indicate something else, could the two be different for a different reason—not because God was primarily trying to teach them He was Creator and Redeemer?



Could it be something about the state of the people to comprehend what God was trying to teach them and God having to step down to a more childlike level to teach them?

What law is creation built to operate upon? Design law and reminding them that God is the Creator reminds them of God's original purpose for humankind—thus the original set of 10 Commandments were to be understood through level 7 lenses—God's law as design law with this creation was to serve a larger purpose in the context of the GC—to be living repositories of God's living design law for life, as Adam and Eve had children and governed this planet in perfect harmony with God's design laws.

However, the people couldn't understand, they preferred a golden calf—so God met them at level one, which is reward and punishment and establishes Himself as powerful—I am powerful and can punish the gods you prefer—remember I brought you out of Egypt and punished their gods, so don't look to those false gods.

I think the second set, was written because the people refused to be enlightened and preferred earthly gods.

The same thing has happened since Sinai and since Christ—people prefer the gods of this world which operate upon imperial imposed law and teach in Christianity that God functions like we do, imposing rules and inflicting punishments. This lie is an obstruction to the 3 angel's messages, it is an obstruction to the final message to lighten the world, and it is to be opposed by those who worship the Creator God.

TUESDAY

The lesson points out that the Sabbath is a day when all were equal, in that no person in power could mandate that a subordinate work, not even the animals.

Hmmm.... does that mean the animals are equal to humans? So, animal sacrifices, really were human sacrifices?

If the Sabbath was a day teaching equality—why did they have slaves?

If we believe all people are equal will we “own” other people as property?

The lesson points out that the Sabbath law would prohibit an employer from forcing an employee to work on Sabbath—what about an employee who wants to work on Sabbath is that okay?

What about fireman, EMTs, ER Docs and nurses, the people who keep the electricity operating?



If you were in charge of society would you pass laws that on Sabbath everyone is required to stay at home and no employment is practiced by anyone?

Friday's lesson quotes *The Desire of Ages* p 206,207:

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}

What kind of law is in operation here? The law of love—design law, not rules!

What about the other injunction of the Sabbath commandment—not the negative of what you shall not do, but what you shall do:

“Six days you **shall labor** and do all your work...” (Ex 20:8 NIV84)

If it is sin to labor on the Sabbath, is it sin to NOT to labor six other days of the week?

Is idleness a sin—failure to engage in meaningful, useful, industrious activity?

Did God design us for activity, for work, to use our energies to build, organize, plant, harvest, create, help, to do meaningful work? It doesn't mean make money, but invest oneself in something of value—it might be writing music, drawing, painting, sculpting, gardening, researching, homemaking, cooking, but something that requires the investment of one's energy and ability.

What happens to people who don't do anything meaningful? Will they grow, mature, develop, or will they lose abilities and maturity and become less capable?

Why? What law is it at work?

Is it a sin to live a life of lethargy, idleness, laziness, and slothfulness?

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, “While the original...” Do we ever fall into this? Why do you love the God who gave us the Sabbath? How is the Sabbath a blessing to you?



The Blue Zones book noted that one of the five places in the world that has the highest concentration of people living to be over 100 years old is Loma Linda CA, and one of the reasons they cited was the weekly Sabbath practiced by SDAs.

A weekly day of mental rest, to decompress, to get off the rat wheel of life and to unwind with God and family is healthy to brain, body and relationships—IF done out of freedom and love. However, if done out of fear of punishment, resentment, and anger it is not a blessing.

That is why the Bible says we must call the Sabbath and delight.

The lesson points out that Jesus chose the Sabbath to perform many miracles, of chronic health problems rather than the other days of the week—why?

What law does healing operate upon? What Jesus trying to enlighten to how God's law function on the day they that was the most filled with arbitrary rules? Have we learned the lesson?

THURSDAY

What is the significance of the Sabbath rest for the land? Is it related to the weekly Sabbath?

Did the land before sin need a rest every 7 years? Will the land in the new earth need a rest?

Is this God instituting within their culture a principle of conservation necessary given the nutrient cycle in the soil?

FRIDAY

read and discuss questions



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Check our website for new chapters of *The Remedy* the Psalms will be going up slowly as they are completed and edited. When an entire book of the Old Testament is complete then it will be added to the app and when you update the app you will get the new book. Thank you for your prayers and support as I work on this project.

July 19,20, 2019: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Living Truth SDA Church in London, Ontario Canada.

September 13,14, 2019: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Gentlebrook Intermediary Care Facility, Hartville, OH.

September 21, 2019: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Crossroads Community Church in Georgetown Delaware.

October 9-12, 2019: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the American Association of Christian Counselors World Conference at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville. Come and Reason Ministries will have a booth in the exhibit hall sharing our material with the attendees.

November 15-17, 2019: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Norwegian SDA Health Worker's Retreat in Oslo, Norway.

January 17-19, 2020: The Power of Love Training and Equipping Course. If you would like to be prepared to more effectively share this message then come to this course. More details will be forthcoming shortly. Allen Texas (30 miles north of DFW airport). See events.comeandreason.com for more details and to sign up.