



## 2023 2Q Three Cosmic Messages—Lesson 8 The Sabbath and The End

### SABBATH

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What do you think of the title—The Sabbath and The End?

Have you ever heard presentations regarding the Sabbath and end-time events?

What have you heard?

Is the final issue in the war between Christ and Satan a test over which day one attends weekly worship services?

- Is the issue in our salvation, in our preparation to meet Jesus, in our being ready to be translated into heaven without seeing death as simple as which day of the week a person goes to church?
- If a person absolutely insists on worshipping on the Bible Sabbath does that guarantee that they won't get the mark of the beast?
- Those who crucified Christ 2000 years ago wanted Him off the Cross by sunset why? So they could keep the Bible Sabbath – does that mean they had the seal of God?
- Does Satan care if a group of people worships on Sabbath as long as they worship him?
  - Who did Jesus Himself say was the Father of the Jewish leadership, those Sabbath keepers who crucified Him?

“You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire”  
(John 8:44 NIV84).

- So we have people keeping the Bible Sabbath who are, according to Jesus, children of Satan.
- Doesn't that mean, to the degree the Sabbath is involved in end-time events, or any events in human history, it must be more than simply the day of the week one avoids work or attends worship services?
- Do these questions mean that the Sabbath is not important, or has no divine value? No—it means that any gift of God can be misused and misapplied to cause harm.
  - God has given us food to eat and water to drink, can people misuse food to cause sickness, and misuse water to drown others?
  - God has given us the gift of marriage—can people abuse the marriage relationship to cause harm?
  - This is not a question about what day of the week is the Sabbath, every serious Bible student knows that the Bible Sabbath is Saturday. The questions before us, are:
    - What is the purpose of the Sabbath?



- How are we to understand and experience it?
- What impact does the Sabbath have upon who we understand God to be and our relationship with Him?
- What role does the Sabbath have for human beings today?
- Is there a Great Controversy function for the Sabbath—is it important as we approach the second coming of Christ?

Our lesson is focusing our attention upon the importance of the Sabbath as we approach the second coming of Christ. What is the first question that I like to ask when we study any Bible truth? **What law lens do we understand things through?**

What is the traditional way, the historic way, both in Judaism and in Adventism, that the Sabbath has most often been presented? As an imposed rule given to test our obedience:

Consider this quotation, in a book entitled *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, published by the Review and Herald:

**In an arbitrary manner God appointed** that on the seventh day we should come to rest with His creation in a particular way. He filled this day with a content that is “uncontaminated” by anything related to the cyclical changes of nature or the movements of the heavenly bodies. That content is the idea of the **absolute sovereignty of God**, a sovereignty unqualified even by an indirect cognizance of the natural movements of time and rhythms of life. As the Christian takes heed of the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, **he does so purely in answer to God’s command**, and simply because God is his Creator. Thus, the Sabbath command comes nearer to being a true measure of spirituality than any other of the commandments, and, as in the days of Israel of old, **it is often more of a test of loyalty to God than is any of the others...** (Raoul Dederen, *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, 1982; from the chapter is titled, “Reflections on a Theology of the Sabbath”).

If the Sabbath is an arbitrary test of obedience, then what type of law would it be? It would be an imposed law that would require God to enforce it with inflicted punishment—a law like we sinners make. What kind of a god is that? An arbitrary god who makes up arbitrary rules and uses his power arbitrarily to inflict punishment and who cannot forgive rule-breaking or there is no justice. This is Satan’s fantasy, delusion, false narrative, and lie about God.

Consider these historical quotes from one of the founders of the SDA church, one who valued the Bible Sabbath, put these two quotes together and discern what the author is saying about how Satan wages war, what Satan says about God’s law, government, methods, and justice and then consider how the Sabbath is presented in the quote we just read:

**In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed**, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, **it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan**; and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth



and justice. When men broke the law of God, and defied His will, Satan exulted. It was proved, he declared, that the law could not be obeyed; man could not be forgiven. Because he, after his rebellion, had been banished from heaven, Satan claimed that the human race must be forever shut out from God's favor. **God could not be just, he urged, and yet show mercy to the sinner.** (Desire of Ages 761).

**From the beginning** it has been Satan's studied plan to cause men to forget God, that he might secure them to himself. Hence he has sought to **misrepresent the character of God**, to lead men to cherish a false conception of Him. The Creator has been presented to their minds as **clothed with the attributes of the prince of evil himself,--as arbitrary, severe, and unforgiving,--**that He might be feared, shunned, and even hated by men. Satan hoped to so confuse the minds of those whom he had deceived that they would **put God out of their knowledge**. Then he would **obliterate the divine image in man and impress his own likeness upon the soul**; he would imbue men with his own spirit and make them captives according to his will. (Testimonies to the Church vol. 5 p. 738).

What is Satan method of attacking God as described here? He attacks God's law by describing it as imposed and requiring God to inflict punishments. Thus God becomes the source of inflicted pain, suffering and death as punishment for sin, and the one being in the universe from whom we need to be protected. God then is presented as arbitrary, the Sabbath as arbitrary, made up, and God is presented as severe, unforgiving—He requires a legal payment of human blood, He cannot forgive outright, and this is exactly how the church has presented God and the Sabbath. And this misrepresents God and God's justice and obstructs our ability to trust God.

Satan declared that “God could not be just and yet show mercy to the sinner.”

**It is impossible to be both just and merciful to the sinner with imposed law!**

It is not just to arbitrarily inflict punishment on an innocent person and then declare the guilty person innocent because the punishment required by the law has been applied to the innocent. This is irrational, nonsense, and makes God out to be untrustworthy. Thus, those who believe this must dethrone their God-given reasoning abilities and believe such nonsense without understanding, believe based on rules, authority, or “blind faith” because the priest, pope, pastor, parent, told them that God, the Bible, or the red leather books said so.

If God's law functions like human law, then Satan's position is true. As long as the church presents God's law as functioning like human law, then they are misrepresenting God and obstructing the plan of salvation. Worse, they are contributing to the rebellion against God and leading people to reject God altogether.

But when we return to worshiping God as Creator and see things through design law, it becomes perfectly clear how justice and mercy meet.

Can anyone explain how, via design law, God can be just and yet show mercy to the sinner?



By God always doing what is right and just—what is in harmony with His nature, character, and law of love—and what does the justice of love require of the righteous individual when they see another person dying from a condition that can be cured?

If your child disobeys your rule to never touch the medicine in the medicine cabinet, and under the temptation of friends, has one of those pill parties where they dump all the medications into a bowl and take handfuls of pills with alcohol, and you come home to find your child seizing and foaming at the mouth as a direct result of their disobedience of your rule—what would the justice of love require of you?

- Would you get out your belt and beat them to punish them for their sin?
- Would you throw gasoline upon them and light them on fire to give them proper torment before executing them for their sin?
- Would you take one of your other healthy children, ask if they would be willing to take their dying brother's punishment, and assuming one of them, in love, said yes, would you shove a bunch of pills down their throat and then burn them to death to make sure a legal death penalty payment was made to assuage your anger and wrath and ensure justice was done so you don't have to kill your other child who is already dying from a toxic overdose and then would you turn and declare your dying child is perfectly health while they remain terminal?
- Would you immediately intervene to provide remedy to your dying child in order to save and heal them?
- And, if necessary, would you put them on artificial life support while the remedy is being applied?
  - That is the history of this planet. As soon as Adam and Eve sinned, God intervened (intercession) and put the entire planet in a protective bubble of grace, suspending for a time the full results of sin—allowing for an artificial state to occur, what we call the first death, the sleep death, which is not the wages of sin death. As Paul says in Romans, God left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—God used His grace to hold at bay the full results of what sin does in order to provide Jesus, our Remedy, and give us time to partake of all that Jesus has provided to heal and restore us.

“God sent him to die in our place **to take away our sins**. We receive forgiveness through faith in the blood of Jesus' death. This showed that **God always does what is right and fair**, as in the past when he was patient and **did not punish people for their sins**. And God gave Jesus to show today that **he does what is right**. God did this so he could judge rightly and **so he could make right any person who has faith in Jesus.**” (Romans 3:25-26 NCV).

- And if your child's actions caused them to experience renal failure and they needed a kidney transplant to survive, what would the justice of love lead you to do for your child? Would you donate your kidney? And would this donation be required by law? Yes, the laws of health require functioning kidneys to live? And in providing the new kidney, you are restoring your



child to harmony with the law through sacrifice of yourself. Are you doing away with the law? Or does your sacrifice show that the law cannot be changed to meet your dying child in their terminal condition?

So as we discuss the Sabbath question, it will come down to whether we understand it through imposed or design law. If we understand it through imposed law, then we take this gift God has given us and use it to advance Satan's warfare against God, just as the Jews did 2000 years ago when the Lord of the Sabbath stood before them and they acted to kill Him, for Sabbath-breaking among other things.

As we continue our exploration of the Sabbath, consider these historical quotes from the most influential founder of the SDA church:

**The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God.** Upon this battle we are now entering,—a battle **between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition.** (The Great Controversy 582).

**There is no such thing as weakening or strengthening the law of Jehovah. As it has been, so it is. It always has been, and always will be holy, just, and good, complete in itself. It cannot be repealed or changed.** To “honor” or “dishonor” it is but the speech of men. (Prophets and Kings 625).

**Between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah will come the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. Upon this battle we are now entering—a battle not between rival churches contending for the supremacy, but between the religion of the Bible and the religions of fable and tradition.** (Prophets and Kings 625).

If you agree with these quotations, then it raises serious questions about the role of the Sabbath in the final issues. Such as, when Satan began his war in heaven, was there a Sabbath?

Jesus said,

The Sabbath was **made** for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath. (Mark 2:27,28)

Consider the truths this short text contains:

- The Sabbath was made—just like the Earth was made, the sun and moon were made, the plants and animals were made, and Adam and Eve were made!
- Therefore, the Sabbath has a beginning, an origination point, and that point was at the end of creation week of this planet, which was after Satan's rebellion started. Thus, the war in heaven, which began over God's law did not include the Sabbath day.



- Further, Jesus' statement tells us the Sabbath was made for human beings, not for angels; this indicates that the Sabbath was not a question of obedience in heaven when the rebellion started, but is somehow valuable or beneficial to humans in the middle of this war.

Next important point to note is that the Sabbath was created **after** sin entered the universe but was given as a gift to humans **before** Adam and Eve sinned. This indicates it was not a rule to be obeyed, but for another purpose.

What was the purpose or intention of God in creating the Sabbath and giving it as a gift for human beings?

Consider the origins of the weekly seventh-day Sabbath.

- Which day of the week is the Sabbath? The seventh.
- Which day of existence was that first Sabbath for Adam and Eve? It was not their seventh day; it was their second day. If humans are to observe a worship day based on *their* seventh day, then humans should be worshipping on Thursday.
- Was the purpose of the Sabbath in Eden so that Adam and Eve could physically rest and recover from a hard work week?
- What was the condition of the world when the Sabbath was made?
- Consider the type of activities that Adam and Eve did during the six work days while in Eden:
  - Went for walks in nature
  - Studied nature
  - Interacted with the animals
  - Walked with God in the cool of the day
  - Appreciated God and all He had done in the creation of the world
  - Talked with angels
  - Did they have to pull weeds?
  - Was there any planting to do?
  - Any harvesting and storing in barns to do?
  - Any fertilizing, irrigating, or pesticides to spread?
  - Were there houses to build?
  - Was there laundry, vacuuming to do, or dishes to wash?
  - Was there anything for them to do that we call work?
- What was the purpose of the Sabbath in Eden?
- Did the Sabbath in Eden have any purpose in the Great Controversy? What?

In other words, were Adam and Eve's non-Sabbath activities very similar to the activities we find valuable to do on Sabbath?

Did Adam and Eve do any of the following on Sabbath in Eden?



- Attend church services?
- Have communion ceremony?
- Go to confession?
- Do penance?
- Pay tithe or bring offerings?
- Would they still walk in nature, pick fruit from the trees to eat, interact with the animals, converse with God and angels?
- So what was different for Adam and Eve about the Sabbath than any other day of the week?
- Was the difference primarily in their behavior or something else?

Could the purpose of the Sabbath in Eden be in what the day itself revealed? Could it be in what the day itself represented? And could the Sabbath day reveal something about God that God wants every human to understand, to know both intellectually but also experientially about Him? **Could the Sabbath be different from the other six days of the week not because of what Adam and Eve did differently, but because of what God did differently on the seventh day of creation week?**

**Could it be that the purpose for which the Sabbath was created was to be a reminder, a sign, a signal, an indicator, a testament, an evidence, a memorial, a flag, pennant, signet, a revelation of God's character, methods, principles, law, and form of government?**

The Sabbath was made by God and it was made holy, blessed, sanctified, set apart, how? Was the Sabbath made holy by legislation? Was it made holy by declaration, or was it made holy by both design and action, by deed, by how it came to be, by what God tied to that day in its origin? In other words, the Sabbath was set apart at and by creation and the actions of God in its origin.

What did God do on days one through six of Creation week? God expended divine power and energy to create. What did God do on day seven of Creation week? God rested! God **ceased** using creative power—what is significant about this, especially in the context of the war?

What was happening in the rest of the universe when the Sabbath was made? War over God's right to rule. Satan was alleging God is selfish, that God makes up rules and inflicts punishment, that angels are not truly free.

What does it reveal about God that in the context of this rebellion, instead of using power to force every knee to bow, God instead creates new intelligent life—gives these new beings pro-creative power to make beings in their image, and gives them dominion over a planet to govern as they so choose, and then God rests, God steps back, God stops using power—God leaves all His intelligent creatures **free!** God creates a day, a time, an opportunity, an experience where He rests.

Does this fact, this action by God in establishing the Sabbath as a day set apart from all the other days by His choice to not use power, to rest, to create a time in which intelligent beings are left free to think and consider for themselves without coercion, have any use, utility, purpose, value, worth, function in



the war between Christ and Satan? Is there some divine power attached to and contained within the Sabbath, some power we need in the controversy?

Paul wrote in Romans:

I am not ashamed of the **gospel**, because it is the **power** of God for the salvation of everyone who believes (Romans 1:16 NIV84).

What is the power that Paul is referring to that is found in the gospel? What type of power is this? Is this the power of physical might? No! it is the power of truth and love, the truth and love of God's character, methods, principles and design law.

Is this same good news power contained in the Sabbath? What kind of power is gospel power?

Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

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. (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NIV84).

What kind of war is this? What kind of power is in the divine weapons we use?

Do you think the war in heaven was fought with different weapons? Do you think the angels were using light sabers and photon torpedoes?

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. (Revelation 12:7-8 NIV84).

The Greek translated "war" in Revelation 12:7 is **πόλεμος** [*polemos* /**pol**-em-os/], from which we get polemic—it is a war of words, a war of words, of ideas. Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44).

Just as EGW wrote:

**The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God.** Upon this battle we are now entering,—a battle **between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition.** (The Great Controversy 582)

We are in a war between two ways of thinking, two ways of understanding, two ways of believing, functioning, and acting—one is reality-based, one is fable or fantasy based; one is truth-based the





other is founded on lies; and another way to describe fantasy is falsehood, artificial, not real, simulated—as in simulated realities, or virtual worlds.

Satan is the father of lies, he wants people to believe that whatever we decide, think, desire, believe is the way things work, that our so-called truth defines truth, that we can create our own reality, we can create artificial worlds, virtual worlds, and be anything we choose. That in this satanic, delusional, false, fable world when we say that there is no male or female then there is no male and female; and if we say that there is no good or evil then it is so. In this satanic delusion there is only me, myself, and I, what I want, a world divorced from eternal reality, divorced from the laws our Creator build reality to operate upon, a world where every person can be their own god.

Does the Sabbath have any power to refute this? Does the Sabbath declare every week that there is a Creator God who built reality and His laws are the laws reality function upon and no human invention, fantasy, imagination, declaration, proclamation, legislation can ever change the laws of God because God's laws are the protocols reality itself function upon? **Including the 7-day weekly cycle built by God into time itself.** And the Sabbath reminds us of reality, that our fantasies don't change reality. We may believe there is no male or female, that a person can simply choose their gender—but the Bible says that leaving objective reality and making up one's own beliefs is delusional (2 Thessalonians 2:11).

Consider what is happening in the world today as we read Psalm 2, from *The Remedy*:

Why are the nations of this selfish world angry at God's character of love?  
Why do their people plot in vain against God's design?

2 World leaders take their stand  
and the rulers unite together  
against the Creator and his design for life  
and against the One anointed to be our remedy.

3 They say, "Let us break free from God's design  
and reject God's protocols for life and health."

4 The Creator, who from heaven sustains reality, hates their foolishness;  
the Lord knows their words don't change reality — they're just meaningless noise.

5 He fiercely corrects their misunderstanding  
and persistently assails their false perspectives, instructing them,

6 "I have chosen who will reign in Zion,  
my King will rule in sinless perfection."

7 The king will make God's healing plan known:  
God said to me, "You are my Son;



today my Fatherhood to you has become known.

8 Ask me,  
and I will give you all the nations,  
the entire world will be yours.

9 You will govern them with an unbreakable shepherd's rod of truth and love;  
you will destroy selfishness and crush their ability to coerce and deceive  
like iron crushes pottery."

10 Therefore, worldly rulers, wise up!  
You, who govern the earth, have been warned as to how reality works.

11 So, with humble admiration, live in harmony with God and his designs,  
celebrate him with fervor.

12 Accept the Son with a loving heart lest he let you go  
to die from your terminal condition,  
for he may release you to your choice at any moment.  
Happy and healthy are they who abide in him.

God is the creator of reality. His laws are the protocols reality function upon. Fantasy, make-believe, imagination do not change reality.

And the Sabbath is part of our reality, but how does the Sabbath fit in? The war is over ideas, attitudes, beliefs, love, and trust. God created the Sabbath in the middle of the war and it was created as a gift for humans. It is designed by God to us to help us cooperate with God in winning the war over sin in our own lives, how?

When Lucifer rebelled in heaven, he did not allege God was powerless—it was an allegation or attack on how God wields power, it was an attack on God's trustworthiness, is God worthy of our trust, love, devotion, and worship.

Satan's allegations were against how God governs or uses His power. And thus, Satan's attacks were against God's law. Satan suggested that God makes up rules and enforces those rules with inflicted punishment and that such a state of things restricts freedom and reveals God is not love, is not good, and is not trustworthy. Lucifer alleged that he had a better way and that way was to do away with God's law so that angels could have freedom to do anything they wanted—and Satan's principles are being advanced in this world today—do you see them?

But freedom from the laws that govern reality only results in chaos, disorder, pain, suffering, fear, guilt, shame, selfishness, and death.



And this man of lawlessness is being revealed, we see it in the world today as we approach the second coming of Christ. Paul wrote:

Concerning **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ** and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, **for that day will not come until** the rebellion occurs and the **man of lawlessness** is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. (2 Thessalonians 4:1-4 NIV84).

Do you see this in the arbitrary laws humans are making up? Do you see that as people reject God as Creator, and build their own virtual, fantasy, artificial worlds, and pass laws (note I am focusing upon what governments and lawmakers are doing. This is not a discussion of the poor souls who are struggling with physical and mental health problems and are confused about their gender) to arbitrarily declare a man can be woman and compete in women's sports, and use women's bathrooms, that the image of Satan is being produced in people? We are seeing more division, more hostility, more debasing of the noble qualities of character. Satan is setting himself up in God's spirit temple to be the one adored, admired and worshiped.

Do you see the fulfillment of Revelation 18:3:

“For all the nations have drunk the **maddening wine** of her adulteries. The kings of the earth **committed adultery** with her, and **the merchants of the earth grew rich** from her excessive luxuries.” (Revelation 18:3 NIV84).

Do you see all the nations embracing the godless theories, all the nations advancing a fantasy view of reality that promotes selfishness, do you see the merchants of the world working with media and governments to advance policies and practices that punish godly values and seek to get rich through these corrupt practices?

The only outcome to rejecting God and His design laws for life is pain, suffering, guilt, shame, and eventual death.

We need healing, we need to be restored to God's design for life and health.

So, where does the Sabbath fit in? What role does it play in God healing us as we approach the second coming of Christ?

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy (or sanctifies you). (Exodus 31:12,13)



The Sabbath, and our recognition and observance of it, is a sign that God makes us holy. Does that mean Sabbath-keeping makes us holy and saves us?

Circumcision was a sign for Abraham and his descendants—did circumcision actually do anything to make him or his descendants holy or righteous? Or was circumcision a sign that Abraham had already been set right or made righteous?

Which came first, Abraham's heart being set right with God or the sign of circumcision? Paul makes this very point in Romans 4:9-12.

Can people be circumcised physically without ever having their hearts set right with God?

So, how does the Sabbath and our observance fit into God making us holy if it is not a rule we keep and our works or behaviors do not make us holy?

Consider this historical quote:

**All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind** and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment. **We are not merely to observe the Sabbath as a legal matter. We are to understand its spiritual bearing upon all the transactions of life.** All who regard the **Sabbath as a sign** between them and God, showing that He is the God who sanctifies them, **will represent the principles of His government. They will bring into daily practice the laws of His kingdom. Daily it will be their prayer that the sanctification of the Sabbath may rest upon them. Every day** they will have the companionship of Christ, and will exemplify the perfection of His character. **Every day** their light will shine forth to others in good works. (Testimonies to the Church vol. 6 p. 353).

What is described here? Is this describing a one day in seven experience or a daily experience?

The commandment says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

- If we commit terrible sins on the Sabbath day, have we made the Sabbath less holy?
- If we live perfectly holy and righteously on the Sabbath day, have we made the Sabbath more holy?
- Can we do anything to make or keep the Sabbath day holy or take away holiness from the Sabbath day? So, when the commandment says that we are to keep the Sabbath day holy, is it talking about the day, or is it talking about ourselves—that we are to keep ourselves holy?
- And can a person be a holy and righteous member of God's family and kingdom one day in seven?

So, the quote from EGW above makes perfect sense, the Sabbath is somehow a gift from God that is to be employed by us as a spiritual weapon in our cooperation with God to be a holy priesthood all week long.



How is the Sabbath useful in our holiness?

How does the Lord make us holy?

- Does God do this with divine power alone, or is there a part that we have to play in that process of our being made holy?
- Do we have choices to make?
- Do our choices have any impact in our salvation and our being made holy by God's divine power?
- Can God make someone holy while they actively choose to rebel against Him?
- Can a person make themselves holy by anything they can do apart from God?
- Is there some type of choosing that we must make that is involved in God's plan to transform and save us? What? And how is the Sabbath involved?

Is salvation about making sure we have the right set of doctrinal beliefs? That we have a correct understanding of which day is the Sabbath, how to perform biblical baptism, belief in a literal 7-day creation week, accurate understanding and practice of tithing and offerings, correct understanding of marriage, right beliefs about the state of the dead, accurate interpretation of Bible prophecy?

Does correctly and rightly understanding all these truths mean one has salvation?

Did the Jews who crucified Christ do so because Jesus:

- Used a different Bible?
- Kept a different Sabbath?
- Worshiped at a different Temple?
- Didn't believe in seven days of creation or that God was Creator?
- Ate a different diet?
- Had a different list of animals to be used in their ceremonies?
- Had a different list of feast days to be observed?

**Understand, salvation is not found in believing the right list—salvation is found in trusting the right God.**

**And if one has the right list, but understands that list, including the Sabbath, through imposed law, then they have the wrong god.**

It is only by returning to worship the Creator whose laws are design laws that we can understand Bible truths in their right setting, and that setting removes the lies of Satan and results in our trusting God and when we trust God we open our hearts to Him and He pours His Spirit into our hearts and there is a divine, supernatural transformation of desires and motives, and then we choose to act out, live out, put into practice the methods and principles of God. All of which are embodied in and represented by the Sabbath.



The Sabbath is a gift that is filled with meaning, truth, and power created by God to be used by God in our sanctification. And we are to be sanctified in spirit, soul, and body:

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole **spirit, soul and body** be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it. (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 NIV84).

The Sabbath is a sign that God sanctifies us or makes us holy, and God is going to sanctify or make us holy in spirit, soul, and body. How is the Sabbath involved in this?

First the Sabbath is evidence of God's character, methods, and principles. Truth, presented in love, while leaving His intelligent creatures free. Its very existence proves Satan lied about how God governs. If God were an arbitrary rule-maker who inflicted arbitrary punishments for rule-breaking, God would have simply punished Lucifer and ordered the rest of the angels back into line. He would never have created the Sabbath as a day where God rested, a day where the angels and humans are left free to think and decide for themselves.

And thus, the Sabbath refutes the fantasy that we can make up our own reality, our own simulation, our own virtual world. The Sabbath is evidence of a Creator God whose laws govern reality and we either harmonize ourselves with those protocols for life, or we die from the result of breaking them. Thus, the idea that God's law can be changed and the Sabbath can be replaced by man's declaration is fantasy, it is no different than saying a man can declare himself to be a woman.

So the Sabbath is a gift to sanctify our souls—our psyches—our minds with the truth of God as Creator, as Savior, whose laws are design laws and the One who is altogether trustworthy.

Second, when we are won back to trust through the evidence of God's character of love and the truths that the Sabbath is a sign of, we open the heart and God pours His Spirit into our hearts and we are healed spiritually as we choose to trust Him and rest in His grace. His love casts out our fear, our shame and guilt are washed away by His goodness, mercy, forgiveness, and grace. Our ugly, sin-ridden identity is replaced with a new identity Christ-like, we become truly *Christian*. We experience spiritual healing in which we have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control manifest in our characters and we grow to become ever more like Jesus.

And in this new life we choose to honor God with our bodies—free from guilt, shame, the workaholic practices of the fear-driven world—we choose to rest each Sabbath trusting God with our lives, our fortunes, our businesses, and our bodies experience greater health and wellness.

- We must choose to study His word and decide, do we believe God is Creator and His laws are design laws, or do we believe the lies that God is arbitrary and makes up rules that require Him to inflict punishment?
- We must choose, based on the truth that Jesus has revealed, to trust God, to value what He values, say yes to what God reveals, say no to what is opposed to God's kingdom, and to apply



God's design law to our practices in how we live and treat others—we present truth, in love, and leave others free.

- We must choose to rest in God, to trust God with our everything, fortunes, families, and futures and we demonstrate that trust by choosing to wave the flag of God's design law kingdom by resting from pursuing our own business on the Sabbath.
- Why must we choose all of this?

Because God doesn't want robots programmed by Him or slaves who mindlessly obey rules out of fear of punishment. He wants free intelligent beings operating in harmony with Him, and *the only way to heal us and retain our individuality is with our freewill cooperation.*

So, does the Sabbath provide evidence of God's character of love, freedom, truth?

Does the Sabbath also provide us opportunity to choose to stop promoting self, to rest from all aspects of self-indulgence, whether seeking wealth (work for gain), whether pleasure seeking, or trying to save self by working hard to keep the rules, including the Sabbath? That we rest trusting in God?

Do you see why Satan hates the Sabbath?

Now, since the lesson focuses on the Sabbath and the end-time, let's consider some historical ways the SDA church has presented this issue and see if we can advance and improve our understanding—we will be contrasting imposed law versus design law:

There are longer versions of this idea, but the following quote gets the point across:

- The sign, or seal, of God is revealed in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, the Lord's memorial of creation. . . . The mark of the beast is the opposite of this--the observance of the first day of the week. (Testimonies to the Church vol. 8, p. 117).

Any concerns or questions about this statement?

Statements like this are often misunderstood and misused because they are viewed through the imposed law model.

If viewed through the imposed law lens, what does this statement lead to?

So, what is the design law way of understanding this statement?

What is a mark or sign?

A symbol that stands for or signifies something else: So these two days of worship stand as signs or symbols for something else, what? **Two types of governments or two ways of governing!**



How did the Sabbath become a day set apart from the other days? By creation, by design, thus the Sabbath is a sign of God's government or kingdom which operates upon design law.

How did Sunday get set apart as a day of worship from the other days? By legislation, by man-made rules. Thus Sunday becomes a mark or sign of imposed law and represents governments that are made by sinful beings—because created beings cannot build reality, we can only make up rules and enforce those rules with inflicted punishments. So these two days are symbolic, or signs, of two types of laws, which result in two types of governments, which have two different gods.

Consider the days as flags of two different governments or seals of two different governments. Are the flags of the government the government, or only signs, marks, or symbols of the government?

The flag of the USA has historically stood for liberty and equality of all persons, the land of opportunity. Those who oppose these historic principles over the last decade have worked hard to attack the flag, to devalue it, to kneel rather than stand with hand over the heart when the national anthem is played, to work to assign false values of exploitation, enslavement, and abuse to the flag. Why? Are such attacks actually attacks on the flag, or attacks against the government that the flag represents?

Likewise, the various attacks against and actions to replace the Bible Sabbath are not primarily attacks against the Sabbath day. They are attacks intended to undermine and replace God's design law government with Satan's imposed law government—replacing God's kingdom of love, with Satan's fear-based kingdom of survival of the fittest, and dethroning Jesus and enthroning Satan into our hearts and minds as the one we admire and worship.

Could a person wear the flag of one country, which marks them as being a member of that country, but actually be a traitor and fighting for the other side?

Think about that when you consider who is on God's side and who is on Satan's side by merely what day a person attends church.

So, what is the mark of the beast? Is it attending church on a day other than Sabbath? Consider this quote:

The time has come for the true light to shine amid moral darkness. The third angel's message has been sent forth to the world, **warning men against receiving the mark of the beast or of his image in their foreheads or in their hands. To receive this mark means to come to the same decision as the beast has done, and to advocate the same ideas, in direct opposition to the word of God.** (Review and Herald, July 13, 1897 par. 5).

What decision did the beast make and what ideas did it advocate that are in direct opposition to the word of God? Is it not the idea that God's law is imposed and God is the source of inflicted pain, suffering, and death as punishment for sin? And justice requires the sovereign to use power to inflict external punishment on rule-breakers? And the church, having changed the day of worship from





Sabbath to Sunday in their legislative counsels give evidence or a mark that they do not consider God's law to be design law, but believe God's law is like human law, imposed rules that can be changed.

Thus the issue in the end, of which the two days stand as signs, is the issue of God's law of love, versus Satan's imposed law construct; God's rule of love versus Satan's rule of fear and selfishness; God's design law versus worldly imposed laws. It comes down to the methods one practices and **the two days are symbolic of two systems.**

And what does the beastly systems of the earth do? They coerce, they force, they inflict punishment for disobedience. Consider this quote:

But when the decree shall go forth **enforcing** the counterfeit sabbath, **and** the loud cry of the third angel **shall warn men against the worship of the beast and his image**, the line will be clearly drawn **between the false and the true. Then** those who still continue in transgression will receive the mark of the beast. (Evangelism 234, 235).

Is the mark about the day upon which one attends church, or is it about the law one believes God governs by and therefore the methods employed, and ultimately the character one forms as they become like the god they worship?

The mark is about the methods one employs in how they treat others, which law people embrace into their hearts in how they live and treat others. Do they practice, truth, love, and freedom, or do they employ lies, fear/selfishness, and coercion?

Thus, any time we use power to coerce the conscience of others we are acting beastly and marking ourselves as loyal to the beast and not loyal to the kingdom of God.