

Sabbath: Why Saturday and What Makes It Holy?

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | April 23, 2010



I wanted to know if you had much info or guidance to any resources that speak to the significance of Sabbath being on the 7th day.

Obviously 7 is a design template that God founded the world upon, but I guess more of what I'm getting at is what is the significance of Saturday, the original 7th day Sabbath versus keeping Sunday every 7 days. Because even though the majority of the "Christian" world does not keep a Sabbath (and that includes SDA's) some do and I'm not convinced, that outside of the fact that Sunday has the history of being a mandated day of worship, that I have a satisfactory answer as to why one should keep Saturday instead of Sunday. I don't buy into the whole "because God sanctified it" argument, because I believe what sanctifies Sabbath is the concepts and characteristics of God that it has been imbued with, it is not a mystical day that has more power than another day. Thoughts, resources, and/or links would be appreciated.

Thanks, T

You have articulated many of the elements very well but may have overlooked the significance. Remember the context of when the Sabbath was made, God was being attacked, politically, His reputation and character. Lucifer in heaven had begun his "war" but the Bible tells us this cosmic war is not with might and power but with words, ideas, and concepts (2Cor 10:3-5). Revelation says there was "war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back" (12:7). The Greek word translated "war" is "polemos" from which we get "politics." Satan, being the father of lies, lied about God in heaven and caused great confusion in the minds of intelligent beings throughout the universe in regard to God.

The "court" of universal opinion in regard to God's trustworthiness was seated and God, rather than merely "claiming" His rightness, rather than merely "declaring" the truth, did more; He gave evidence. God began to create Earth and this solar system. A new kind of creation, a microcosm of the universe, with a new kind of intelligent being, mankind, made in the image of God and given God-like abilities of procreation and dominion to rule (1Cor 4:9). Man was to reveal the truth about God by ruling the earth in perfect love and having children in a perfect world.

Mankind itself is evidence, but God's creation week didn't end there. After this immense display of power, creating earth, the planets of our solar system, the sun and all life on earth, God did something amazing. He created the weekly Sabbath. He presented the truth about Himself in love and then created the Sabbath, resting, resting His case before the universe, leaving all beings free to make up their own minds - about Him!

You have articulated correctly that the elements of truth, love, and freedom associated with the Sabbath are what make it holy as these are the principles of God's character. But don't forget the importance of evidence. If you have a murder, by a pistol, and you have seven identical pistols, but only one was used in the murder, which one is entered into evidence? Only the one used to commit the murder. So only the Sabbath can be entered into evidence for God's character of love - and why?

Because Day One of creation week revealed what about God? That he has power, And Days Two through Six? That he has power. Only Day Seven, the Sabbath, reveals the character of the One who wields the power. So, if God were like Satan alleges, there would be no Sabbath, but because God is not on a power-trip, inflexible, afraid of His free-thinking creatures, and instead is like Jesus, the weekly Sabbath exists and every week the very existence of the Sabbath is "proof" that God is not like Satan alleged, that God can be trusted with all power.

What a wonderful blessing the weekly Sabbath is! Rightly understood, it stands as a shining light, every week, declaring the truth about our all powerful God - that He is equally gracious and loving and trustworthy will all power. It declares that God respects the freedom and individuality of His intelligent creatures and would never use His power to "force" beings to conform. It declares that our all powerful God genuinely wants His intelligent creatures to be free, and in their freedom, understand Him and freely choose loyalty and love for Him! And genuine Sabbath observance is each week celebrating the God who is exactly as Jesus revealed Him to be, each week taking time apart to remember the truth about God's character of love and then practicing that truth in our lives. Sabbath-keepers not only worship on the day which proves our God is as Jesus revealed, but live lives in which they present the truth in love and leave others free.

This is why Satan hates the weekly Sabbath and wants to get people to forget it. He wants people to forget God's character of love, the principle of truth, and the practice of freedom. And those who forget the Sabbath, and all it represents about God's character, will be part of the "beast" system which uses coercion and force, "no one can buy or sell save him who has the mark of the beast" (Rev 13:17). This is Satan's method, to coerce, force and use power to impose his way.

The Jews in Christ's day knew which day of the week was the Sabbath, but they forgot the meaning and significance and failed to incorporate the principles of God into their hearts, and sadly they killed the Lord of the Sabbath. This is the inevitable result of believing Satan's lies about God. Satan knows his lies about God will be destroyed by the truth and thus he hates the Sabbath, because the Sabbath is proof of God's goodness and love. This why God has asked us to "Remember the Sabbath," so that we will hear God every week saying, "Remember I love you. Remember I am not as Satan has alleged. Remember I will not coerce you or inflict arbitrary penalties upon you. Remember, with me you are truly free - please, won't you Remember, Remember me?"