

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
Second Quarter 2014: *Christ and His Law*
Lesson 12 “Christ’s Church *and the Law*”

Read for this week’s study

Gen. 2:16–3:7; Genesis 6; Genesis 12; Deut. 7:6–12; Gal. 3:6–16; Rev. 12:17; 14:6–12.

Memory Text

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. From Adam to Noah
- III. From Noah to Abraham
- IV. From Abraham to Moses
- V. From Moses to Jesus
- VI. From Jesus to the Remnant
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Moderator: Daniel Duda

1. “This week’s lesson traces the continuity of the law (and grace) in God’s church through the ages.” (Sabbath afternoon) This lesson comes closer to the storyline than any other dealing with dogmatic models of law, grace and covenant as understood throughout the Christian history.
2. “God’s church is something like a relay team. Starting with Adam in the garden, the baton has been passed through several phases of salvation history: from Noah to Abraham to Sinai to the New Testament church to the Reformation church, and now to those who proclaim the three angels’ messages.” (Sabbath afternoon) Of course, the question that immediately comes to the mind is, What is the baton?
“The symbol of continuity for God’s church is His law, which, after the Fall, must always be coupled with God’s saving grace. Together, both are the essence of the gospel.” (Sabbath afternoon) What makes “Law & Grace” the baton that is passed throughout history?
3. “Read Genesis 2:16–3:7. What test was given to Adam and Eve? Why would such a test be needed for perfect beings?” (Saturday’s lesson) What is the significance of

- the fact that this is a test? Is God testing Adam & Eve because He needs to learn something about them? Do they need to learn something about themselves? Or maybe the family in the on-looking universe has something to learn?
4. “Though after the Fall Adam and Eve were to ‘pass the baton’ to the next generation, humanity’s moral spiral downward was quick and dirty.” What was it that Adam and Eve were supposed to pass on to the next generation? “Of their first two sons, only Abel chose to join God’s church, while Cain became possessed by the spirit of covetousness, lying, murder, and parental disrespect. Things went from bad to worse until evil overshadowed the good, and by the time of the Flood only Noah and his family could truly claim to be members of Christ’s church.” (Sunday’s lesson) Was God down to only eight people at the time of the Flood? What is the significance of the Flood narrative in the book of Genesis?
 5. “The world into which Noah was born was worse than any society that has ever existed, which means that it must have been pretty bad.” (Monday’s lesson) Evolution maintains that humanity is constantly evolving for the better. The Biblical story seems to imply that humanity is constantly degrading. In what sense was the world of Noah worse than any other?
 6. “How are we to understand the idea that God was ‘sorry’ that He had created humanity? Why does this not mean that God had been unaware of what was going to happen? (See Deuteronomy 31:15–17.)” (Monday’s lesson)
 7. “Ellen G. White wrote that the designations ‘sons of God’ and ‘daughters of men’ refer to faithful men marrying unfaithful women. What lessons, then, can we learn from Genesis 6 about the church’s interaction with the world?” (Monday’s lesson) How fair is it to use Ellen White as an exegetical authority? Can’t we deduce the same thing from the text? She objected to being used as an authority on the “daily” [sacrifice] of Daniel 8:14. What is the implication for use of non-Biblical authority for our religious interpretations? If we object when the Catholics and the Orthodox use church councils’ collective decisions as exegetical authority, is it fair for us to use individual(s) as exegetical authority? How do we know when one is safe to use as an extra-biblical authority?
 8. “In fact, soon after the call Abraham proved himself to be cowardly and deceptive (Genesis 12:11–13), violating God’s law. Nevertheless, Abraham was a man of true faith, and by God’s grace this faith was credited to him as righteousness.” (Tuesday’s lesson) What made Abraham “a man of true faith”? And what was it that was “credited” to him?
 9. “Although God had chosen Abraham for a specific task, there were people in many different nations who feared Him.” (Tuesday’s lesson) What was the specific task that God chose for Abraham? What are the implications that God’s call does not make one a sole owner of God’s revelation? “There is more evidence that knowledge of God existed in the world at that time, even before the work and ministry of Moses.”

10. “Though ancient law codes found in Egypt and Mesopotamia also provide evidence for a widespread knowledge of the principles and precepts found in God’s law, none of them is complete.” (Wednesday’s lesson) What makes the ancient laws found in Israel complete?
11. “So, the gospel itself, with its clear emphasis on both law and grace, most fully manifests and reveals the covenant.” (Wednesday’s lesson) Has the gospel been preserved in a clear and balanced way in Judaism, in the medieval church, in Lutheranism, in Dispensationalism, or in Adventism?
12. “Unfortunately, the Christian church—even with all this light—proved itself at times less faithful to the covenant than was ancient Israel, and deep apostasy soon took over almost everywhere. The Reformation, beginning in the sixteenth century, started to reverse this trend, but even it faltered, and many false doctrines and teachings have remained in the Christian world, including (as we have seen) wrong views about the role and purpose of the law in the life of New Covenant Christianity. God would call out a remnant people to restore many lost truths.” (Thursday’s lesson) Does the remnant have a better overall track record than the Christian church (or Israel)? God always calls, and He has always had a re-thinking movement, but that movement needs to be subject to the same rethinking process to which it calls others!

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Who inspired Isaiah to be the “gospel prophet” and bear such a witness? Who inspired Micah and Amos and Moses and all the rest? All of the people through the years who’ve seen the truth about Jesus and have born witness to the truth have been moved by the same spirit. The Spirit that inspired the holy men of God to write the scriptures. Can anybody testify that Jesus is Lord unless the Holy Spirit instructs him and moves him, you remember? So the mark of God’s true people, I believe, in all ages and particularly at the present time, is that they love God and their neighbors as themselves. That would be one qualification. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Revelation*, recorded August, 1982 Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/79MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/80MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

What is the main thing that is mentioned of Abraham? Abraham trusted God, and God said, “That’s what I’m looking for.”

Sometimes we read that as a sort of accounting procedure. “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him in the ledger as righteousness.” No, in the great controversy, my understanding would be, every once in awhile there has arisen an individual on this planet; and they are not all men, there are ladies mentioned, who really trusted God. Trusted in Him enough to listen, and

God did wonderful things with those people, and their conversations are on record. Moses was another; Job was another. And God says to the family, makes mention of it in Scripture, "There's a friend with whom I can speak face-to-face as a man speaks with his-friend." And there's one thing mentioned of every one of them-the word "trust" or "faith" or "belief." All God has ever asked of us is trust. Sin is a breach of trust. The remedy is to win us back to trust. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Revelation, recorded August, 1982 Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

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Further Study with Ellen White

The Holy Spirit will not compel men to take a certain course of action. We are free moral agents; and when sufficient evidence has been given us as to our duty it is left with us to decide our course. {RH, July 17, 1888 par. 4}

The glory upon the face of Moses was the reflection of that light which Christ came into the world to bring for the benefit of man. {1SM 231.2}

Moses himself was unconscious of the beaming glory reflected upon his face, and knew not why the children of Israel fled from him when he approached them. He called them to him, but they dared not look upon that glorified face. When Moses learned that the people could not look upon his face, because of its glory, he covered it with a veil. {1SM 232.1}

Adam and Eve, at their creation, had a knowledge of the law of God; they were acquainted with its claims upon them; its precepts were written upon their hearts. When man fell by transgression the law was not changed, but a remedial system was established to bring him back to obedience. The promise of a Saviour was given, and sacrificial offerings pointing forward to the death of Christ as the great sin offering were established. But had the law of God never been transgressed, there would have been no death, and no need of a Saviour; consequently there would have been no need of sacrifices. {PP 363.1}

The law of God existed before man was created. It was adapted to the condition of holy beings; even angels were governed by it. After the fall, the principles of righteousness were unchanged. Nothing was taken from the law; not one of its holy precepts could be improved. And as it has existed from the beginning, so will it continue to exist throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. "Concerning thy testimonies," says the psalmist, "I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever (ST April 15, 1886). {1BC 1104.2}

In the beginning, God gave His law to mankind as a means of attaining happiness and eternal life. Satan's only hope of thwarting the purpose of God is to lead men and women to disobey

this law, and his constant effort has been to misrepresent its teachings and belittle its importance. His master stroke has been an attempt to change the law itself, so as to lead men to violate its precepts while professing to obey it. {PK 178.2}

So long as they [Adam and Eve] remained loyal to the divine law, their capacity to know, to enjoy, and to love would continually increase. They would be constantly gaining new treasures of knowledge, discovering fresh springs of happiness, and obtaining clearer and yet clearer conceptions of the immeasurable, unfailing love of God. {PP 51.1}

To the very close of the controversy in heaven the great usurper continued to justify himself. When it was announced that with all his sympathizers he must be expelled from the abodes of bliss, then the rebel leader boldly avowed his contempt for the Creator's law. He reiterated his claim that angels needed no control, but should be left to follow their own will, which would ever guide them right. He denounced the divine statutes as a restriction of their liberty and declared that it was his purpose to secure the abolition of law; that, freed from this restraint, the hosts of heaven might enter upon a more exalted, more glorious state of existence. {GC 499.2}