

# Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

## Third Quarter 2014: *The Teachings of Jesus*

### Lesson 11 “The Sabbath”

#### Read for this week’s study

John 1:1–3; Matt. 12:1–5; Luke 4:16–21; John 5:16, 17; Matt. 24:20.

#### Memory Text

“And He said to them, ‘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, NKJV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Christ, the Creator of the Sabbath
- III. Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath
- IV. The Example of Jesus
- V. Miracles on the Sabbath
- VI. The Sabbath After the Resurrection
- VII. Further Study

#### Notes for Consideration

Moderator: Zdravko Stefanović

#### JESUS & THE SABBATH

##### A. Introduction

1. Holiness in time (Genesis 2:1-3)
2. Reminder of Creation (Exodus 20)
3. Reminder of Redemption (Deuteronomy 5)
4. Sabbath Principles (Exodus 21; Leviticus 25)
5. Sabbath and the prophets
  - a) Justice (Isaiah 1)
  - b) Covenant (Ezekiel 20)
  - c) Mercy (Isaiah 58)
  - d) Universality (Isaiah 56)
  - e) New universe (Isaiah 66)

##### B. Sabbath in Judaism

1. Distinguishing mark
2. Circumcision
3. Temple services

4. To keep and to celebrate
5. Joy of the Sabbath

**C. Jesus and the Sabbath**

1. Positive approach
2. “His custom”
3. Healing ministry
4. Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27-28)
5. Work of Redemption (Luke 4)
6. Rested in the tomb (Luke 23:36)
7. Christ the Creator (Colossians 1:16-17)

**D. Contemporary Relevance**

1. Ecology
2. “Mental hygiene”
3. Taste of eternity

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**“All our life should be a pilgrimage to the seventh day.”**

Abraham J. Heschel

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**Thoughts from Graham Maxwell**

For example, in the narrow view—lest that sound disrespectful and unrealistic, by the narrow view I mean the view that is preoccupied with what God has done for you and me. And that might be perfectly understandable in the lives of some of us. We may still even have our tents pitched at the foot of Sinai. We have no right to tell anybody where he should have his tent pitched. But in the narrower view that is preoccupied with our own salvation, consistently the seventh-day Sabbath is presented as a mere test of obedience. I’ve read it again several times of late. But in the larger view, in the setting of the great controversy over the character of God, the Sabbath is God’s gift to us, to remind us of the answers in the great controversy. To remind us of all the things he revealed about Himself, and about freedom, and about His unselfishness in the Garden of Eden. How He even shared His creative power with us, and enabled us to create little people in our own image. Magnificent was the revelation given during creation week, and the Sabbath was given to remind us of those truths. But then when we lost our freedom, and God gave it back to us again, He says in the other version of the Ten Commandments, which has just as much authority as the Exodus one, the Sabbath was given to remind us of how God rescued us from Egyptian bondage. Sabbath is a monument to freedom. And then at the end of crucifixion week, when the ultimate questions about God were answered by the way Jesus suffered and died, the next day was a seventh-day Sabbath, and the

whole universe paused, earth time, to think and to remember and to celebrate the answer that God gave. The Sabbath is even described in the Bible as a type and a foretaste of the final rest to come. Instead of the Sabbath being a mere test of obedience, it becomes a great aid to us, and a time of celebration of the truth that is the basis of our trust, and the basis of our freedom. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Larger View*, part 1, recorded October, 1982, Monterey, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/1MMLVIEW>*

AGM: The sealing is mentioned first in Revelation, then the mark of the beast. I think the mark of the beast, really a symbol of loyalty to the opposition, should be compared with the symbol of loyalty to God. I believe that to receive the seal of God is to be so settled into the truth both intellectually and spiritually that one cannot be moved. I believe that to receive the “mark of the beast” is to be so settled into the lie (and there are Scriptures that talk about the lie) preferring Satan’s lies to the truth, you’ve substituted his lies for the truth. I believe to receive the mark of the beast is to be so settled into Satan’s false picture of God that not even the Spirit of God could move us. We cannot be moved. So in essence, the seal or the mark represents an inner decision and commitment for eternity with respect to God.

LV: For those of us who have roots in Seventh-day Adventism, for example, the seal of God has been tied very closely to the Sabbath. In fact, I thought we had referred to the Sabbath as the seal of God in itself. But I hear you making a distinction there.

AGM: Well, one has to stop and realize that the people who crucified Christ kept the seventh-day Sabbath scrupulously; very, very carefully. Did they have the seal of God? They certainly were not settled into the truth about God. When Jesus brought the truth about God, they said He had a devil, and they killed Him to silence His witness. On the other hand though, you remember the evening we talked about how the Sabbath sums up the good news about our God? I believe that the knowing, meaningful, intelligent, thoughtful observance of the seventh day—as a reminder of all these great demonstrations of the truth about our God, could be an outward expression of an inward conviction and a “settling into” this truth about our God. The seventh-day Sabbath beautifully fits this mark of identification of those who are committed to the truth about God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, session 10 with Lou Venden, “The Reminder of the Evidence” recorded March, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/10MMCAG>*

Yet Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for us; Mark 2:27. It was not to be a mere test of obedience, but rather to be a help. I believe that the great purpose of the Sabbath is to remind us of the Truth that is the basis of our faith; the very truth that does set us free. In the first place, the Bible tells us in Exodus 20 and Exodus 31, that the Sabbath is designed to serve as a

reminder that God created us; that we are His creatures. But to be more specific according to Colossians 1:16, the one who created us was none other than Christ himself. The seventh-day Sabbath reminds us that the one who came to save us is also the one who made us in the beginning. The gentle Jesus who died on Calvary is also the supreme, all powerful creator of the universe. God did not send some subordinate person to die for us. The Creator came Himself, one who is equal with God, for he is God. By keeping holy the seventh-day Sabbath, we acknowledge our faith in Jesus as not only our Savior, but also our Creator and our God.

A second way in which the seventh-day Sabbath serves to strengthen faith is mentioned in Exodus 31:13 and Exodus 20:12, 20. There we're told the Sabbath is designed to remind us that God is the one who sanctifies us. Our sanctification includes not just forgiveness, but the healing of the damage sin has done. It means the harmonious development of our physical, mental and spiritual powers, until the image of God, in which we were originally created, is perfectly restored. The observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is an acknowledgement that only the Creator can perform such a marvelous work of healing and transformation. Just as He created us in the beginning, so He has the power to re-create us now. Surely it is no less a miracle of creation to restore fallen human beings than it was to create them perfect in the beginning. No wonder David prayed as he did after his sad experience with Bathsheba, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." Psalm 51:10.

Now some seek to accomplish this transformation by themselves by rigorous obedience, self-discipline and self-denial. The Sabbath comes each week to remind us that only by faith in our Creator can the healing work be done. It's strange that Sabbath-keeping should be thought to be a legalistic act; a denial of true faith. Actually, Sabbath-keeping done in the right spirit is a denial of legalism, a denial that we can save ourselves. It's an acknowledgment that only by faith in the One who created us in the beginning can we possibly be healed and re-created now. And what a perversion it is to suggest that seventh-day Sabbath keeping is legalism; except that we can turn it around that way—and it has been done.

A third way in which the Sabbath serves to remind us of the truth and strengthen our faith in God is mentioned in Hebrews chapter four. There the Sabbath is described as a type and a foretaste of the final rest and restoration to come. Just as God rested from His labors at the end of creation week so there remains a Sabbath-like rest; the Greek says a '*sabbatismos*'. You can almost hear the meaning of the word. "There remains there a Sabbath-like rest for the people of God. When the Children of Israel marched into the land of Canaan, they failed to enter into God's rest," the apostle says, "because of lack of faith. They possessed the Promised Land but they did not enjoy the Sabbath-like rest that faith brings." Just remember the book of Judges. Would you call that the Sabbath-like rest? That is not God's intention. "But those who maintain their faith in Christ may begin to enjoy this rest even in this life and they will enter into it fully when they are admitted to the heavenly Canaan and Eden is restored." So by keeping holy the

seventh-day Sabbath, we acknowledge our anticipation of this Sabbath-like rest to come. We acknowledge our faith in the second coming of Christ and the re-creation of all things.

There are more of course, but these three focus on the purposes of the Sabbath and answer the three great questions that have stood in the minds of thinking people—the three great quests of philosophy. Where have we come from? Why are we here? And where do we go after we die?

But mankind has paid a heavy price for neglecting the Sabbath, or substituting another day. For without the Sabbath to provide the answers to the three great questions of life, other solutions have been substituted. Where have we come from? Without the seventh-day Sabbath to remind us that in the beginning Christ created us, room has been left for the substitution of the theory of the evolutionary origin of the human race. Or as others say more scientifically, we don't know where we've come from. Why are we here? How do we attain to the greatest good in life? Without the seventh-day Sabbath to remind us that righteousness and salvation come by faith in Jesus Christ, room has been left for the substitution of the fundamental error of righteousness by works. Or as others have said more carelessly, we don't know why we're here. So let's eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die! And where do we go after we die? Without the seventh-day Sabbath to point forward to the second coming, to the rewards of faith and the results of sin, room has been left for the substitution of the belief in the natural immortality of the soul. Or as others prefer to say, we don't know where we go after we die. So again, let's eat, drink and be merry.

Incidentally, those three substitute answers; aren't they almost universally held? And not just in Christianity. Belief in the natural immortality of the soul is shared by almost everybody. The idea that salvation comes by works; Ellen White states that is the fundamental error of every false religious system, salvation by works. There are all kinds of substitute explanations as to where we came from that put God in a bad light, or that make of no effect the plan of salvation. But all three of these substitutions wipe out all the significance of the plan of salvation. This is why the seventh-day Sabbath is so vital a part of God's last message to the world. The main difference between the many religions in the world and true Christianity lies in the answers to these three great quests.

We also speak of the seventh-day Sabbath as being the seal of God and we all want to be sealed at the end. In what sense do you understand the seventh-day Sabbath to be the seal of God? In what sense could it be? Would it be possible to be observing the seventh-day Sabbath at the end and be on the wrong side in the great controversy? It's happened before. Is the mere refraining from work from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown evidence that one has the seal of God? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Faith, Righteousness and Salvation, # 13 "Faith and the seventh-day Sabbath", recorded April, 1975, Loma Linda, California} *To listen*

*to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/13MMFRS>

### **Further Study with Ellen White**

The great Jehovah had laid the foundations of the earth; He had dressed the whole world in the garb of beauty and had filled it with things useful to man; He had created all the wonders of the land and of the sea. In six days the great work of creation had been accomplished. And God “rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.” God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All was perfect, worthy of its divine Author, and He rested, not as one weary, but as well pleased with the fruits of His wisdom and goodness and the manifestations of His glory. {PP 47.2}

The Sabbath is a sign of creative and redeeming power; it points to God as the source of life and knowledge; it recalls man’s primeval glory, and thus witnesses to God’s purpose to re-create us in His own image. {Ed 250.1}

The Sabbath and the family were alike instituted in Eden, and in God’s purpose they are indissolubly linked together. On this day more than on any other, it is possible for us to live the life of Eden. . . . {Ed 250.2}

God reserved the seventh day as a period of rest for man, for the good of man as well as for His own glory. He saw that the wants of man required a day of rest from toil and care, that his health and life would be endangered without a period of relaxation from the labor and anxiety of the six days. {ML 140.2}

God is merciful. His requirements are reasonable, in accordance with the goodness and benevolence of His character. The object of the Sabbath was that all mankind might be benefited. Man was not made to fit the Sabbath; for the Sabbath was made after the creation of man, to meet his necessities. After God had made the world in six days, He rested and sanctified and blessed the day upon which He rested from all His work which He had created and made. He set apart that special day for man to rest from his labor, that, as he should look upon the earth beneath and the heavens above, he might reflect that God made all these in six days and rested upon the seventh; and that, as he should behold the tangible proofs of God’s infinite wisdom, his heart might be filled with love and reverence for his Maker. {2T 582.3}

As we come close to the heart of nature, Christ makes His presence real to us, and speaks to our hearts of His peace and love. {COL 25.1}

Though sin has entered the world to mar His perfect work, God still gives to us the Sabbath as a witness that One omnipotent, infinite in goodness and mercy, created all things. Our heavenly Father desires through the observance of the Sabbath to preserve among men a knowledge of

Himself. He desires that the Sabbath shall direct our minds to Him as the true and living God, and that through knowing Him we may have life and peace. {6T 349.1}

The Sabbath is a token between God and His people. It is a holy day, given by the Creator to man as a day upon which to rest, and reflect upon sacred things. God designed it to be observed through every age as a perpetual covenant. It was to be regarded as a peculiar treasure, a trust to be carefully cherished. {OHC 343.4}

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}

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}

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}