

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Fourth Quarter 2020: *Education*

### Lesson 12 “Sabbath: Experiencing *and* Living *the* Character of God”

#### Read for this week’s study

Genesis 1, 2; Exodus 16:14–29; Isaiah 58:1–14; Matthew 12:1–13; Luke 13:10–17.

#### 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. Time to Be Astonished
- III. Time for Rediscovery
- IV. Time for Learning Priorities
- V. Time for Finding Balance
- VI. A Time for Community
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. In this lesson we will consider “how we can think of the Sabbath as, not just a day or rest, but as a means of education, as well.” “Sabbath [is] an opportunity for education and personal development.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. How does the first Sabbath (Genesis 2:1–3) link back to the first Creation story and link forward to the second Creation account? (Sunday’s lesson) Does this help us to understand what God meant by blessing the Sabbath and making it holy? In what way was the first Sabbath an educational opportunity/experience for Adam & Eve? In what sense it is similar and different for us?
3. “The Sabbath is a pivotal learning experience in Israel’s journey of rediscovery.” (Monday’s lesson) How does Sabbath aid us in a journey of rediscovery? What was the miracle of manna supposed to communicate?
4. How is the Sabbath connected with learning priorities? (Tuesday’s lesson) What can we learn from Isaiah 58:1-14 today? What is the difference between the Sabbath as a feast with a blessing (vs. 13-14) and as a fast without a blessing (vs. 2-5)?

5. What can we learn from Matthew 12:1-13 and Luke 13:10-17? (Wednesday's lesson) In what sense is the Sabbath a time for finding balance? Why is balance between a command and freedom so important? How does it work for people in different stages of development? What are the implications for those who are more mature? If Jesus dared to challenge the interpretation and authorities of his day, what would he do today?
6. While the first four points were to construct a viable identity for myself and thus giving meaning to my life as an individual, Thursday's lesson looks at Sabbath as a time for community. Why is this important? How does this balance the previous four aspects?
7. Why is it that people live ever more lonely lives on an ever more connected planet? How can Sabbath be a tool to build more meaningful communities and strengthen our social fabric and bring the world closer together? How is this counter-intuitive to our mostly 19<sup>th</sup> century-based Sabbath keeping? In what sense is Sabbath needed as education in our world today?
8. Which aspects of Sabbath as a tool of education are missed by the lesson? What about Sabbath as an antidote to exclusivism (Isaiah 56:3-8)? What about Sabbath as resistance to coercion (Deuteronomy 5:12-14)? How can the Sabbath be an antidote against anxiety (Exodus 20-22)?

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

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. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Faith, Righteousness and Salvation, #13 “Faith and the seventh-day Sabbath”, recorded April 1975, Lynwood, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/13MMFRS> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/14MMFRS> (Part 2)

Now just think what God has done. In the fourth commandment, going back to the last day of creation week, he says, “You need to remember the Sabbath, because the Sabbath will remind you of all the things I’ve done through the years to reveal the kind of person I am.” The Sabbath that follows crucifixion week, look how that reminds us of what he had just done. Now, he says, “I not only ask you to remember the Sabbath, and tell you not to do any work on it; I also tell

you to enjoy it.” Can you command a person to enjoy something? Did you ever try it? One of your children has just been confronted with a *small* spoonful of spinach as you think he should be allowed to settle for, and he’s gone into, you know, the state of mind that sometimes children can, faced with their vegetables and their greens. And you say, “Son, you eat your spinach. And that’s not all; you like it! And don’t fake it; really like it. Smile. Tell me you love it.” Did you ever try that? It’s enough if he just eats it and objects all the way. At least he gets some vitamins into him and some iron. But to say, “And you’ve got to enjoy it”? What this proves is, the things that God desires the most cannot be commanded. You cannot order a person to enjoy the Sabbath. You can’t do it. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in All 66 – Isaiah*, recorded January 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

\*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/33MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/34MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

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

God designs that the Sabbath shall direct the minds of men to the contemplation of His created works. Nature speaks to their senses, declaring that there is a living God, the Creator, the Supreme Ruler of all. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.” Psalm 19:1, 2. The beauty that clothes the earth is token of God’s love. We may behold it in the everlasting hills, in the lofty trees, in the opening buds and the delicate flowers. All speak to us of God. The Sabbath, ever pointing to Him who made them all, bids men open the great book of nature and trace therein the wisdom, the power, and the love of the Creator. {PP 48.3}

Great blessings are enfolded in the observance of the Sabbath, and God desires that the Sabbath day shall be to us a day of joy. There was joy at the institution of the Sabbath. God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All things that He had made He pronounced “very good.” Genesis 1:31. Heaven and earth were filled with rejoicing. “The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Job 38:7. 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 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 is a pledge given by God to man—a sign of the relation existing between the Creator and His created beings. {3SM 256.1}

The God of heaven is constantly at work. It is by His power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears and every flower blooms. Every drop of rain or flake of snow, every spire of grass, every leaf and flower and shrub, testifies of God. These little things so common around us teach the lesson that nothing is beneath the notice of the infinite God, nothing is too small for His attention. {8T 260.1}

God does not ask us to do in our own strength the work before us. He has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. . . . {8T 19.1}