

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2021: *Rest in Christ*

Lesson 1 “Living in a 24/7 Society”

Read for this week’s study

Genesis 2:1–3; Jeremiah 45:1–5; Exodus 20:11; 2 Samuel 7:12; Mark 6:30–32; Genesis 4:1–17.

Memory Text

“My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God” (Psalm 84:2, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Worn and Weary
- III. Running on Empty
- IV. Defining Rest in the Old Testament
- V. Rest in the New Testament
- VI. A Restless Wanderer
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Our lives are governed by rush hours, work hours, medical appointments, Zoom meetings, shopping, and school functions. The drumbeat of constant engagement with the world around us threatens to drown out what is really important. How do we find rest amidst so much hustle and bustle? (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
2. Read Genesis 2:1-3. The first Sabbath did not come on Adam and Eve’s seventh day, it came on their second day. Why would God create a rest day before anyone was even tired? What do the following texts teach about why rest is so important for us? Read Mark 6:31, Psalm 4:8, Exodus 23:12, Deuteronomy 5:14, and Matthew 11:28. What can you and I do to better experience the rest that God wants us to have? (Sunday’s Lesson)
3. Read Jeremiah 45:1-5. Who was Baruch and what was the state of his emotional health at the time this was happening? What message did God send to him

personally? Is there any direct relevance in that message for us today as well? What do you think God's emotional state was as the Babylonian's destroyed Jerusalem and took Israel captive? (Monday's Lesson)

4. God created us for activity, but that activity is to be punctuated by rest. There are a number of words for rest in the Hebrew (Old Testament). It can mean to cease work or take a holiday. It can mean settled or at home. It can mean being quiet or at peace. It can mean to lie down, to sleep, to die. We can rest individually and collectively. Rest can affect us physically, socially, and emotionally. It is not limited to Sabbath. Read Deuteronomy 31:16 and 2 Samuel 7:12. What kind of rest is being talked about here? (Tuesday's Lesson)
5. There are also several words in the Greek language for rest (New Testament). It can mean to be relaxed and refreshed. It can mean Sabbath rest. It can mean simply living a quiet life. It can also mean that someone has no objections and thus remains quiet. Read Mark 6:30-32 in its larger context. Why did Jesus tell His disciples to come aside and rest, considering the many mission opportunities they currently had? Why did Jesus command them to rest rather than simply inviting them? What does it mean today to truly rest? (Wednesday's Lesson)
6. Read Genesis 4:1-12. What made Cain a restless wanderer on the earth? Was that a punishment from God or was it in some way a natural consequence of his actions? What implications do your answers to these questions have for rest today? Read Genesis 4:13-27. How did Cain react to God's statement? (Thursday's Lesson)
7. The constant pressure to keep up, to be available all the time, to live up to ideals that are neither realistic nor God-given, can make people sick—physically, emotionally and spiritually. To what degree is our restlessness self-imposed? What can we do to rest ourselves and be a restful place for others? (Friday's Lesson)
8. Everything we do today is done faster than before and yet we still feel hurried and restless. What does that tell us about the reason God placed the Sabbath in the middle of the commandments? (Friday's Lesson)
9. The Sabbath was instituted before the Fall. What does that tell us about the role of rest even in a sinless, perfect world? (Friday's Lesson)

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.

There are more of course, but these three focuses or purposes of the Sabbath 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?

If to be "sealed" means to be so settled into the truth about God, both intellectually and spiritually, that one cannot be moved, then obviously there have been many people who appeared to observe the seventh-day Sabbath who were not settled into the truth. In fact they

had accepted the lie. The men who crucified Christ didn't work from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown. Would you say they had the seal of God? So in what sense could the seventh-day Sabbath be the seal, do you think? The Sabbath really does sum up this truth about God. It answers the questions about life, and the questions about God; they go right together in a package, don't they? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Faith, Righteousness and Salvation, #13, "Faith and the seventh-day Sabbath", recorded April 3, 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)

Further Study with Ellen White

The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy that nothing earthly can destroy,—joy in the Holy Spirit,—health-giving, life-giving joy. {MH 115.3}

Our Saviour's words, "Come unto Me, . . . and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28), are a prescription for the healing of physical, mental, and spiritual ills. Though men have brought suffering upon themselves by their own wrongdoing, He regards them with pity. In Him they may find help. He will do great things for those who trust in Him. {MH 115.4}

What is the "rest" promised?—It is the consciousness that God is true, that He never disappoints the one who comes to Him. His pardon is full and free, and His acceptance means rest to the soul, rest in His love. {OHC 97.7}

To all who receive the Sabbath as a sign of Christ's creative and redeeming power, it will be a delight. Seeing Christ in it, they delight themselves in Him. The Sabbath points them to the works of creation as an evidence of His mighty power in redemption. While it calls to mind the lost peace of Eden, it tells of peace restored through the Saviour. And every object in nature repeats His invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28. {Mar 244.5}

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 precious Saviour will send help just when we need it. The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear He has borne before us. The Lord permits conflicts, to prepare the soul for peace. The time of trouble is a fearful ordeal for God's people; but it is the time for every true believer to look up, and by faith he may see the bow of promise encircling him. {GC 633.1}

He who took humanity upon Himself knows how to sympathize with the sufferings of humanity. Not only does Christ know every soul, and the peculiar needs and trials of that soul, but He knows all the circumstances that chafe and perplex the spirit. His hand is outstretched in pitying tenderness to every suffering child. Those who suffer most have most of His sympathy and pity. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and He desires us to lay our perplexities and troubles at His feet and leave them there. {MH 249.3}

Christ came to this earth in human form that He might stand as the Captain of our salvation, so that we should not be overcome by Satan's power. And when the enemy has seemed to be gaining a signal victory over righteousness, God has been working in mercy and power to counteract his designs. {TDG 308.4}

Every weak, doubting, struggling soul who yields fully to the Lord is placed in direct touch with agencies that enable him to overcome. Heaven is near to him, and he has the support and help of angels of mercy in every time of trial and need. {AA 299.1}

But though the conflict is a ceaseless one, none are left to struggle alone. Angels help and protect those who walk humbly before God. Never will our Lord betray one who trusts in Him. As His children draw near to Him for protection from evil, in pity and love He lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. Touch them not, He says; for they are Mine. I have graven them upon the palms of My hands. {PK 570.4}

How graciously and tenderly our heavenly Father deals with His children! He preserves them from a thousand dangers to them unseen and guards them from the subtle arts of Satan, lest they should be destroyed. {3T 373.1}

God has angels whose whole work is to draw those who shall be heirs of salvation. Whenever one takes a step toward Jesus, Jesus is taking steps toward him. The angels' work is to keep back the powers of Satan (MS 17, 1893). {7BC 922.5}

Every true child of God has the co-operation of heavenly beings. Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God. Cherubim and seraphim, and angels that excel in strength, stand at God's right hand, "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. {CC 336.5}

As through Jesus we enter into rest, heaven begins here. We respond to His invitation, Come, learn of Me, and in thus coming we begin the life eternal. Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ. The longer we are in the heaven of bliss, the more and still more of glory will be opened to us; and the more we know of God, the more intense will be our happiness. {FLB 367.4}