

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2021: *Rest in Christ*

Lesson 6 “Finding Rest *in Family Ties*”

Read for this week’s study

Genesis 34; Hebrews 11:17–22; Deuteronomy 4:29; 1 John 3:1, 2; Genesis 39; Ephesians 6:1–13.

Memory Text

“You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen” (2 Peter 3:17, 18, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Dysfunction at Home
- III. Choosing a New Direction
- IV. Finding True Self-Worth
- V. Doing Relationships God’s Way
- VI. The Great Controversy, Up Close and Personal
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. We get to choose many things in life, but none of us got to choose the families we were born into. Many of these families are far from ideal. Family relationships are often complicated and painful, leaving us restless, hurt, and carrying loads of emotional baggage that we often dump on others. How can we find “rest” in this area of our lives? This week is the first in two lessons based on the story of Joseph. In this lesson we explore how Joseph personally coped with serious family dysfunction. In the next lesson we consider how God was able to use Joseph to bring reconciliation into his family. (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
2. Joseph came to know what family dysfunction is from personal experience. But the dysfunction in his family went back several generations, as is usually the case. How

many evidences of dysfunction can you list from the families of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Review the story of Genesis 34. What impact would this incident have on the family as a whole and on Joseph in particular? What would be God's purpose in including such a story in the Bible? Given the sorry history of all three generations, why do you think Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are listed as heroes of faith in Hebrews 11:17-22? (Sunday's Lesson)

3. When Joseph became the victim in a horrific episode of abuse, how did he cope with it? See *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 213-214. What is the solution Ellen White suggests Joseph found? What do Deuteronomy 4:29 and Joshua 24:15 have to say about that? Will that help people cope in every case, or are there other remedies that sometimes need to be pursued? (Monday's Lesson)
4. Joseph grew up with a strong sense of self-esteem. He was the oldest son of the most beloved wife of Jacob and clearly his father's pride and joy. What impact would his being sold into slavery likely have on his self-esteem? How would one find self-worth under such tragic circumstances? What are the key elements of self-esteem? How do most people find self-esteem in today's world? What are the strengths and weaknesses of such attempts? (Tuesday's Lesson)
5. Read Genesis 39:1-6. In what practical ways can we see God's blessing in Joseph's life? What are Joseph's inter-personal relationships like? How did God treat the Egyptians that Joseph was involved with? Read Genesis 39:7-10. What challenge did Joseph face here and how did he choose to manage it? Did Joseph have to deal with a single incident or was the temptation an on-going situation? How does Matthew 5:43-48 apply to Joseph's situation? (Wednesday's Lesson)
6. Did Potiphar believe his wife? Why then did he act the way he did? What evidence is there that Joseph found God's rest even in the prison? Genesis 39:21-22. How does Ephesians 6:5-13 tie Joseph's situation to the cosmic conflict? (Thursday's Lesson)
7. Did God pre-arrange the whole Joseph story or did God use the circumstances that human freedom created? In what way is the Joseph story a microcosm of the cosmic conflict? (Friday's Lesson)
8. The Russian author Leo Tolstoy once wrote: "All happy families are alike, each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." How would you apply this to the stories of the patriarchs? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

When what God wants is understood as friendship, a loving, trusting relationship; then what he wants is obviously not a requirement demanded, but it is an absolutely voluntary experience.

This long debate between faith, works and obedience has troubled saints through the years, but it could be so readily resolved if we looked at the biblical word for obedience. This word obedience is *hupakoē*. The first part "*hupa*" means "under." And the second part, "*akoē*" means

“hearing.” The word means literally, “listening under.” A humble willingness to listen, and of course if we love and trust God we’ll be willing to listen. It wouldn’t make sense for us to not listen to one we love, trust and admire.

Now could God’s expectation of our willingness to listen be one hundred percent? Our performance may be weak. We may stumble as we leave our doctor’s office. But a willingness to listen? Is it too much to say, “Don’t cheat there. Let that be one hundred percent!” If it should seem that God is too demanding in asking for such a relationship, that he expects too much of us, it surely is encouraging to read about the heroes and heroines of faith celebrated in the same chapter of the same book that tells us what faith is.

Look at Hebrews 11:31 and following:

By faith the prostitute Rahab escaped the doom of the unbelievers, because she had given the spies a kindly welcome. Need I say more? Time is too short for me to tell the stories of Gideon [who needed a wet fleece, and a dry one], Barak, Samson [look what he did], and Jephthah, David [look what he did], and Samuel and the prophets. . . . These also, one and all are commemorated for their faith. (NEB)

Is God too demanding? He even holds those people with all their weaknesses, with all their faults and sins; he holds them out to us as people, evidently, who were willing to listen, loved and trusted God and were waiting for him to heal the damage done. And he puts them in Hebrews 11 for our encouragement.

But surely no story is more encouraging than the story of the thief on the cross. What did he do for Jesus to say those wonderful words in Luke 23:42- 43? “And he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ And Jesus said to him, . . . ‘You will be with me in Paradise.’” (RSV) There was the thief hanging on the cross with a thief hanging on the other side and Jesus in the middle. And the two robbers were cursing and swearing and mocking Jesus, as were the crowds.

Something happened to the thief. He listened to Jesus saying, “Father, forgive them.” And he listened to Jesus say, “John, please look after Mother when I’m gone.” And maybe the thief had a mother, and that really touched him. But then that saying, “Father forgive them.” Because over the head of Christ it said “The King of the Jews.” And the thief thought to himself, “If Jesus ever really has a kingdom, and rules over a kingdom where the king says “I forgive you,” I’m a thief, I need to be forgiven. I wouldn’t be safe in any other kingdom than a kingdom where the king says, “I forgive you.”

And he said, “Jesus, if that’s the kind of kingdom you’re going to reign over, I’d like to live in it. Please, could you remember me?” And I think that was a little tentative. He didn’t know how Jesus was going to respond. And then there came back the words that confirmed his trust. “Yes, I’d be pleased to remember you.” And the thief died—with his tithe unpaid, and all kinds of

things in his stomach. He never made restitution to anybody, wasn't baptized, never kept a Sabbath. But he'll be in the kingdom! Because after he died, the next moment of consciousness in the resurrection, the thief will come face to face with that same person in the middle. And Jesus will say to him, "You have a lot to learn." And the thief will say, "If you say so. That's alright with me."

I hope that if anything should happen to any of us on the way home tonight, that we would die God's trusting friend. Because if we do, we will arise the next moment of consciousness face to face with God. And we will not be afraid—because we know the truth. We trust him, know him, love him, and all those other things. We've been set right. And if when we see him face to face, and he should say to us, "You know, there's a great deal for you to learn," we would say, "We would be pleased to listen, because we trust you. We admire you. We want to be your friend."

You see, faith is just a word we use to describe a relationship with God as with a person well-known. And the better he is known, the better this relationship may be. Faith implies an attitude toward God of love, of trust, and deepest admiration. It means having enough confidence in God based upon the more than adequate evidence revealed, to be willing to believe what he says; to accept what he offers, and to do what he wishes—without reservation—no cheating, for the rest of eternity. Anyone who has such faith would be perfectly safe to save. This is why faith is the only requirement for heaven, and for salvation. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, #3, "All God Asks Is Trust" recorded January 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/3MMCAG>*

But let's say we're covered by the righteousness of Christ. How does that actually work? Here's the Father, here are a hundred million angels of Daniel 7 as the court sits in judgment and the books are opened. My case comes up, and I have a dreadful record. But I don't need to worry, because I am covered with the righteousness of Christ, and fortunately God does not have 20/20 vision, and doesn't know the secret about what's inside! Jesus knows what's inside, and I'm sure my guardian angel knows what's inside, and the accuser of the brethren knows what's inside. In fact he accuses me day and night before God and says, "Do you want to know what's inside? If God looks, does he say, "Nah, looks pretty good to me." I don't like the thought that I'm somehow sneaking into the kingdom in disguise. Someday God might learn the truth about me. If I am not changed inside, I'm not safe to have around. So this obviously is not for purposes of disguise. God knows. He knows me just as well as anybody else in the Godhead. God says, "I not only forgive you, but I will treat you as if you had never sinned. In fact, I will treat you with dignity and respect, as if you'd always been my loyal children." To be covered

with the righteousness of Christ is not a disguise. It means we'll be treated as if we had lived as righteously as the Son.

So, covered with the righteousness of Christ: What does it mean? I take it to mean that because Christ answered all the problems, he's not asking me to do it. He's asking me, "Have you been won back to trust me? Are you willing to listen? If so, I can heal the damage done." And even though I am a pretty sick patient in my heavenly Father's eyes, God will treat me with dignity and respect, as if I had lived as nobly as his Son. I think that's the covering. I mean, he would really do this. He will treat me with dignity, and with respect, as if I had never been disloyal.

That's a statement. I'd want evidence for that. How about his treatment of the woman taken in adultery? Look at the way he treated her and sought to recover her dignity and self-respect. Look at the way he treated Peter and other people through the scriptures. He really does it. In fact, he even treats "unsavable" sinners with dignity and respect. Look at Judas. He covered for him, so that when Judas went out to betray his Lord, the disciples thought he went out to make an offering to feed the poor. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation, Questions People are Asking About the Plan of Salvation, recorded April 1983, Redlands, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/1MMQUESTP> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/2MMQUESTP> (Part 2)

Last evening we considered the fact that this great conflict is not about us—not that we aren't involved, to be sure, but the issue is not about us. The war began long before we were created. The Great Controversy is about God, about his character and his government. And the brilliant angel once called the light bearer, Lucifer, the morning star—one of the names of Christ was Lucifer. It's just that Lucifer is the Latin for light bearer—in the Greek *phōsphoros* which is translated the morning star. It sometimes horrifies people when I mention that Satan originally had one of Christ's names, or on the other hand, that one of Christ's names is Lucifer. It's a good name. Never call the adversary by that name anymore. He's now Satan—*diabolos*, the devil—the accuser, the adversary.

Specifically, as we were looking last night, Satan has accused God of being untrustworthy, unworthy of our worship and love. Specifically, he's accused God of being a liar. He said so to Adam and Eve. He's accused God of being arbitrary, exacting, vengeful, unforgiving, and severe. And if he's right, then truly God is not worthy of our trust. And there's no peace in the universe. And who would want to live under the authority of such a tyrant?

But to make a long story short, God has answered these charges and the universe has accepted his answers as true. And only on this planet are there any intelligent beings left who think that Satan might be right and God is the kind of person as he describes him. Just look at the many religions of the world where God is indeed a demanding, harsh, unforgiving tyrant. {Graham

Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Great Controversy is Not About Us, #2*, recorded September 1995, Denver, Colorado} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/2MMGCNOTUS>*

Further Study with Ellen White

God has given us the power of choice; it is ours to exercise. We cannot change our hearts, we cannot control our thoughts, our impulses, our affections. We cannot make ourselves pure, fit for God's service. But we can choose to serve God, we can give Him our will; then He will work in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus our whole nature will be brought under the control of Christ. {MH 176.2}

In the secret place of prayer, where no eye but God's can see, no ear but His can hear, we may pour out our most hidden desires and longings to the Father of infinite pity, and in the hush and silence of the soul that voice which never fails to answer the cry of human need will speak to our hearts. . . . {AG 290.4}

In His plan of government there is no employment of brute force to compel the conscience. The Jews looked for the kingdom of God to be established in the same way as the kingdoms of the world. To promote righteousness they resorted to external measures. They devised methods and plans. But Christ implants a principle. By implanting truth and righteousness, He counterworks error and sin. {COL 77.1}

God never forces the will or the conscience, but Satan's constant resort—to gain control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce—is compulsion by cruelty. Through fear or force he endeavors to rule the conscience and to secure homage to himself.—GC 591 (1888). {1MCP 325.1}

Those who accept Christ as their personal Saviour are not left as orphans, to bear the trials of life alone. He receives them as members of the heavenly family; He bids them call His Father their Father. They are His "little ones," dear to the heart of God, bound to Him by the most tender and abiding ties. {DA 327.2}

The life of Christ was a life charged with a divine message of the love of God, and He longed intensely to impart this love to others in rich measure. Compassion beamed from His countenance, and His conduct was characterized by grace, humility, truth, and love. {FE 179.3}

He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. {ML 289.5}

He passed no human being by as worthless, but sought to apply the healing remedy to every soul. In whatever company He found Himself, He presented a lesson appropriate to the time and the circumstances. Every neglect or insult shown by men to their fellow men only made Him more conscious of their need of His divine-human sympathy. He sought to inspire with hope the roughest and most unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might become blameless and harmless, attaining such a character as would make them the children of God. {9T 191.2}

When Adam came from the Creator's hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. . . . It was His purpose that the longer man lived the more fully he should reveal this image—the more fully reflect the glory of the Creator. {FLB 29.7}

Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man. {8T 286.4}

Christ abiding in the soul exerts a transforming power, and the outward aspect bears witness to the peace and joy that reign within. {1SM 337.2}

The new birth consists in having new motives, new tastes, new tendencies. Those who are begotten unto a new life by the Holy Spirit have become partakers of the divine nature, and in all their habits and practices, they will give evidence of their relationship to Christ. . . . {LHU 123.4}

The command, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," would never have been given if every provision had not been made whereby we may become as perfect in our sphere as God is in His. We are to be ever advancing from light to a greater light, holding fast what we have already received, and praying for more. Thus we shall never be left in darkness (*Review and Herald*, Apr. 12, 1892). {LHU 123.5}

The subtlety of Satan will not decrease, but the wisdom given to men through a living connection with the Source of all light and divine knowledge will be proportionate to his arts and wiles. {FLB 312.6}

God is able and willing to bestow upon His servants all the strength they need and to give them the wisdom that their varied necessities demand. He will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him. {AA 242.1}

The supply of divine wisdom is inexhaustible, and the Lord encourages us to draw largely from it. {3BC 1146.8}