

Second Quarter 2023

EGW Notes - Lesson 8, 13 – 19 May

The Sabbath And The End



Sabbath Afternoon, May 13

No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognized by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple, that every soul may have free access to God. His love is so broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of Satan's circle the poor souls who have been deluded by his deceptions. It places them within reach of the throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise.

In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. All are brought nigh by His precious blood. (Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:13).

Whatever the difference in religious belief, a call from suffering humanity must be heard and answered. Where bitterness of feeling exists because of difference in religion, much good may be done by personal service. Loving ministry will break down prejudice, and win souls to God.

We should anticipate the sorrows, the difficulties, the troubles of others. We should enter into the joys and cares of both high and low, rich and poor. "Freely ye have received," Christ says, "freely give." Matthew 10:8.

—Christ's Object Lessons, p. 386.

God has shown for human beings an infinite depth of love, and yet how far short we fall of appreciating this love. Christ died on the cross of Calvary that sinners might be redeemed from the slavery of sin and placed on vantage ground before God. Think of the wonderful love that the Father revealed in making this sacrifice. It is ours to point those outside the fold to this love, ours to tell sinners what Christ has done for them, and what they may become through His transforming grace.

— *This Day With God, p. 269.*

In words of matchless beauty and tenderness, the apostle Paul set before the sages of Athens the divine purpose in the creation and distribution of races and nations. “God that made the world and all things therein,” declared the apostle, “hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him.” Acts 17:24-27.

God has made plain that whosoever will, may come “into the bond of the covenant.” Ezekiel 20:37. In the creation it was His purpose that the earth should be inhabited by beings whose existence would be a blessing to themselves and to one another, and an honor to their Creator. All who will may identify themselves with this purpose. Of them it is spoken, “This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise.” Isaiah 43:21.

— *Prophets and Kings, p. 500.*

Sunday, May 14 The Judgment, Creation, and Accountability

Said Paul, “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.” God had revealed His truth to Paul, and in so doing had made him a debtor to those who were in darkness to enlighten them. But many do not realize their accountability to God. They are handling

their Lord's talents; they have powers of mind, that, if employed in the right direction, would make them coworkers with Christ and His angels. Many souls might be saved through their efforts, to shine as stars in the crown of their rejoicing. But they are indifferent to all this. Satan has sought, through the attractions of this world, to enchain them and paralyze their moral powers, and he has succeeded only too well.

—*Counsels on Stewardship, p. 212.*

However large, however small the possessions of any individual, let him remember that it is his only in trust. For his strength, skill, time, talents, opportunities, and means, he must render an account to God. This is an individual work; God gives to us, that we may become like Him, generous, noble, beneficent, by giving to others. Those who, forgetful of their divine mission, seek only to save or to spend in the indulgence of pride or selfishness, may secure the gains and pleasures of this world; but in God's sight, estimated by their spiritual attainments, they are poor, wretched, miserable, blind, naked.

—*Counsels on Stewardship, p. 22.*

Christ has power from His Father to give His divine grace and strength to man, making it possible for him through His name to overcome. . . .

Jesus does not desire those who have been purchased at such a cost to become the sport of the enemy's temptations. He does not desire us to be overcome and perish. He who curbed the lions in their den and walked with His faithful witnesses amid the fiery flames is just as ready to work in our behalf, to subdue every evil in our nature. Today He is standing at the altar of mercy, presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help. He turns no weeping, contrite one away. The souls that turn to Him for refuge,

Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. Christ unites them to His own divine-human nature.

—*My Life Today*, p. 317.

In the conflict with satanic agencies there are decisive moments that determine the victory either on the side of God or on the side of the prince of this world. If those engaged in the warfare are not wide awake, earnest, vigilant, praying for wisdom, watching unto prayer, Satan comes off victor, when he might have been vanquished by the armies of the Lord. God's faithful sentinels are to give the evil powers no advantage. . . .

He who would overcome must hold fast to Christ. He must not look back, but keep the eye ever upward.

—*E. G. White Comments, in The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1094.*

Monday, May 15 The Sabbath and Creation

Since [Christ] made all things, He made the Sabbath. By Him it was set apart as a memorial of the work of creation. It points to Him as both the Creator and the Sanctifier. It declares that He who created all things in heaven and in earth, and by whom all things hold together, is the head of the church, and that by His power we are reconciled to God. . . . [T]he Sabbath is a sign of Christ's power to make us holy. And it is given to all whom Christ makes holy. As a sign of His sanctifying power, the Sabbath is given to all who through Christ become a part of the Israel of God. . . .

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 labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28.

– ***The Desire of Ages, pp. 288, 289.***

The first four commandments were given to show men their duty to God. The fourth is the connecting link between the great God and man. The Sabbath, especially, was given for the benefit of man and for the honor of God. . . .

The Sabbath was to be a sign between God and His people forever. In this manner was it to be a sign—all who should observe the Sabbath, signified by such observance that they were worshipers of the living God, the creator of the heavens and the earth. The Sabbath was to be a sign between God and His people as long as He should have a people upon the earth to serve Him.

– ***The Story of Redemption, p. 141.***

The true Sabbath is to be exalted to its rightful position as God’s rest day. In the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah is outlined the work which God’s people are to do. They are to magnify the law and make it honorable, to build up the old waste places, and to raise up the foundations of many generations. To those who do this work God says: “Thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Verses 12-14.

– ***Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 352.***

Tuesday, May 16 A Not-So-Subtle Deception

God spoke, and His words created His works in the natural world. God's creation is but a reservoir of means made ready for Him to employ instantly to do His pleasure.

Infinite love—how great it is! God made the world to enlarge heaven. He desires a larger family of created intelligences.

All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made “in the image of God,” and it was the Creator's design that they should populate the earth. . . .

The weekly cycle of seven literal days, six for labor, and the seventh for rest, which has been preserved and brought down through Bible history, originated in the great fact of the first seven days.

—E. G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1081.

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.” “For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.” Psalm 33:6, 9. The Bible recognizes no long ages in which the earth was slowly evolved from chaos. Of each successive day of creation, the sacred record declares that it consisted of the evening and the morning, like all other days that have followed. At the close of each day is given the result of the Creator's work. The statement is made at the close of the first week's record, “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created.: Genesis 2:4. But this does not convey the idea that the days of creation were other than literal days. Each day was called a generation, because that in it God generated, or produced, some new portion of His work.

—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 112.

It is one of Satan's devices to lead the people to accept the fables of infidelity; for he can thus obscure the law of God, in itself very plain, and embolden men to rebel against the divine government. His efforts are especially directed against the fourth commandment, because it so clearly points to the living God, the Maker of the heavens and the earth.

There is a constant effort made to explain the work of creation as the result of natural causes; and human reasoning is accepted even by professed Christians, in opposition to plain Scripture facts. There are many who oppose the investigation of the prophecies, especially those of Daniel and the Revelation, declaring them to be so obscure that we cannot understand them; yet these very persons eagerly receive the suppositions of geologists, in contradiction of the Mosaic record. But if that which God has revealed is so difficult to understand, how inconsistent it is to accept mere suppositions in regard to that which He has not revealed!

“The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.” Deuteronomy 29:29. Just how God accomplished the work of creation He has never revealed to men; human science cannot search out the secrets of the Most High. His creative power is as incomprehensible as His existence.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 113.*

Wednesday, May 17 Creation, the Sabbath, and the End Time

God's claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is based upon the fact that He is the Creator, and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. Thus it is presented in the Bible. Says the prophet Jeremiah: “The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King. . . . The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath

stretched out the heavens by His discretion.” Jeremiah 10:10-12. . . . The Sabbath, as a memorial of God’s creative power, points to Him as the maker of the heavens and the earth. Hence it is a constant witness to His existence and a reminder of His greatness, His wisdom, and His love.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 336.*

[The Sabbath] is the only commandment in the whole Decalogue that tells who God is. It places God in distinction with every other god. It says the God that made the heaven and the earth, the God that made the trees and the flowers and that created man; this is the God that you are to keep before your children, and you have only to point to the flowers and tell them that He made these and that He rested on the seventh day from all His labors. The seventh day is a God-given memorial.

Pointing to God as the maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods. All who keep the seventh day, signify by this act that they are worshippers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man’s allegiance to God.

—*Sons and Daughters of God, p. 59.*

Like the Sabbath, the week originated at creation, and it has been preserved and brought down to us through Bible history. God Himself measured off the first week as a sample for successive weeks to the close of time. Like every other, it consisted of seven literal days. Six days were employed in the work of creation; upon the seventh, God rested, and He then blessed this day and set it apart as a day of rest for man. . . .

After giving the command . . . He states the reason for thus observing the week, by pointing back to His own example: “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

Exodus 20:8 11. This reason appears beautiful and forcible when we understand the days of creation to be literal. The first six days of each week are given to man for labor, because God employed the same period of the first week in the work of creation. On the seventh day man is to refrain from labor, in commemoration of the Creator's rest.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 111.*

Thursday, May 18 The Sabbath and Eternal Rest

In the beginning the Father and the Son had rested upon the Sabbath after Their work of creation. When “the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them” (Genesis 2:1), the Creator and all heavenly beings rejoiced in contemplation of the glorious scene. “The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Job 38:7. Now Jesus rested [in the tomb] from the work of redemption; and though there was grief among those who loved Him on earth, yet there was joy in heaven. Glorious to the eyes of heavenly beings was the promise of the future. A restored creation, a redeemed race, that having conquered sin could never fall,—this, the result to flow from Christ's completed work, God and angels saw. With this scene the day upon which Jesus rested is forever linked. . . . When there shall be a “restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:21), the creation Sabbath, the day on which Jesus lay at rest in Joseph's tomb, will still be a day of rest and rejoicing. Heaven and earth will unite in praise, as “from one Sabbath to another” (Isaiah 66:23) the nations of the saved shall bow in joyful worship to God and the Lamb.

—*The Desire of Ages, p. 769.*

All through the week keep the Lord's holy Sabbath in view, for that day is to be devoted to the service of God. It is a day when the hands are to rest from worldly employment, when the soul's needs are to receive especial attention.

The Sabbath—oh! make it the sweetest, the most blessed day of the whole week. Parents can and should give attention to their children, reading to them the most attractive portions of Bible history, educating them to reverence the Sabbath day, keeping it according to the commandment. They can make the Sabbath a delight if they will take the proper course.

—*My Life Today*, p. 287

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.

The demands upon God are even greater upon the Sabbath than upon other days. His people then leave their usual employment, and spend the time in meditation and worship. They ask more favors of Him on the Sabbath than upon other days. They demand His special attention. They crave His choicest blessings. God does not wait for the Sabbath to pass before He grants these requests. Heaven's work never ceases, and men should never rest from doing good. The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity; . . . but as God ceased His labor of creating, and rested upon the Sabbath and blessed it, so man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 207.

Friday, May 19 For Further Reading

In Heavenly Places, "Sanctifying Power," p. 145;

That I May Know Him, "God's Appointed Signature," p. 211.

Sanctifying Power, May 18

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. John 17:17 {HP 145.1}

The truth which we profess will be of no avail to us unless we are sanctified through it.... While error is prevailing to such an extent in our land, we want to know what is truth, because we cannot be sanctified by error. The better we understand the truth as it is in God's Word, the better we shall know how to sanctify our lives through God's Word. {HP 145.2}

We are in this world as probationers, and God is proving us by giving us an opportunity to obey His truth. It is a very solemn thing to live in this age of the world, and we should not be satisfied unless we have a living connection with the God of heaven, and we should have a sense of our accountability to Him every day of our lives.... {HP 145.3}

There are voices that we shall hear all around us to divert us away from the truth, but if we have an eye single to the glory of God and are striving to do His will, we shall hear His voice and know it is the voice of the Good Shepherd. It is very important that we understand the voice that speaks to us.... {HP 145.4}

There are temptations that will come to every one of us. We all have our different dispositions to overcome, and how are we to know that we are doing this work day by day? We must look into the mirror—God's holy law—and there discover the defects in our characters. It is a very difficult thing for one to understand himself. We must examine closely to see if there is not something that must be laid aside, and then as we make an effort to put away self, our precious Saviour will give us the help we need that we may be overcomers.... {HP 145.5}

This world is not heaven, it is the preparation place; it is the workshop of God where we are to be hewed and chiseled and fitted up for the heavenly mansions. Then do not be satisfied with a mere sense of the truth; God calls for a reformation at every step. It is to have a fitness for the mansions that

Christ has gone to fit up for us. And if we can only be of the heavenly family in the kingdom of glory then we shall have the eternal reward. May God help us to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of His testimony. {HP 145.6}

God's Appointed Signature, July 24

And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God. Ezekiel 20:20. {TMK 211.1}

How shall we distinguish God's true servants from the false prophets who Christ said should arise to deceive many? There is only one test of character—the law of Jehovah. {TMK 211.2}

The Israelites placed over their doors a signature of blood to show that they were God's property. So the children of God in this age will bear the signature God has appointed. They will place themselves in harmony with God's holy law. A mark is placed upon every one of God's people just as verily as a mark was placed over the doors of the Hebrew dwellings, to preserve the people from the general ruin. God declares, "I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them" (Ezekiel 20:12).... There is no need for us to be deceived.... {TMK 211.3}

Satanic agencies have made the earth a stage for horrors which no language can describe. War and bloodshed are carried on by nations claiming to be Christian. A disregard for the law of God has brought its sure result. The great conflict now being waged is not merely a strife of man against man. On one side stands the Prince of life, acting as man's substitute and surety; on the other, the prince of darkness, with the fallen angels under his command.... {TMK 211.4}

There will be a sharp conflict between those who are loyal to God and those who cast scorn upon His law. The church has joined hands with the world. Reverence to God's law has been subverted. The religious leaders are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. As it was in the days of

Noah, so it is in this age of the world. But shall the prevalence of disloyalty and transgression cause those who have revered the law of God to have less respect for it, to unite with the powers of earth to make it void? The truly loyal will not be carried away by the current of evil. They will not throw scorn and contempt on that which God has set apart as holy. The test comes to every one. There are only two sides. On which side are you? {TMK 211.5}