

## Central Study Hour – Sabbath School Lesson Notes

### *“Preparation for the End Time”*: Lesson 6, “The ‘Change’ of the Law”

#### SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read the title. Prophecy predicted that an evil power would try to change God’s law, particularly as it relates to time. The memory verse has that prophecy.

Read the Memory Text. Influence against the law of God is very widespread today, isn’t it?

*Which of the 10 commandments has to do with time?*

Read the 1<sup>st</sup> two sentences of the narrative. Our memory verse fits in well with the mark of the beast issue of Rev. 13.

We must always keep in mind that Sabbath keeping doesn’t earn us salvation. Salvation comes by faith! However, we “understand that in the last days, obedience to God’s law, including the seventh-day Sabbath, will be an outward sign, a mark, of where our true allegiance lies.”

Read or share highlights from the 2nd paragraph of the narrative. Observing the Sabbath is honoring God as our Creator, the LORD of the universe! And the Lord of our lives! None of the other commandments make this so clear. However, many Christians think that the law is bad because it is possible to be self-righteous with the law like the Pharisees of Jesus’ day were.

#### SUNDAY: “The Promise”

Using the law to have a superior attitude, or to try to earn salvation *both* result in a form of Christianity that doesn’t work, that leaves people unhappy, guilt-ridden, and in bondage. In Romans Paul tried to explain a better way. He emphasized the promise of God, God’s solution to man’s sin problem.

Read the 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph of the narrative.

**Read Romans 7: 14, 18-19, 24.** *What is the essence of what Paul is saying in these verses that makes what he says in **Romans 8:1** so assuring?* Paul addresses the hopelessness of the life of defeat, the failure of one “**sold under sin**” to really obey the law. This guilt and condemnation is the opposite of Romans 8:1’s assurance of no condemnation for the person who walks in the Spirit. Paul is talking about the reality of sin. We all can relate to the struggle with our fallen flesh as it pulls us toward sin. Don’t we all know what it is like to have a strong temptation on some line leading us to do what we know we should not, or not to do what we know we should? Many somehow see the law as the problem, but for Paul, the problem isn’t the law; the problem is our flesh, our sin nature. This struggle can be so intense leading a person to desperate words.

Read the rest of the last paragraph of the narrative. *Can they really obey the law?*

**Read Romans 8:4.** *How is it possible to obey the law?* By walking in the Spirit; the power comes from the Holy Spirit! It’s not human power at all.

*In what ways can you relate to what Paul is saying in these verses? Why is Romans 8:1 such a wonderful promise?* It’s true that sin is a very powerful problem, but we don’t have to be condemned and stuck in bondage to our sinful nature. Something humanly impossible is now possible through the Holy Spirit. And this is real freedom! Freedom from the power of sin.

## MONDAY: "The Law and Sin"

When people break God's law and see that they are guilty under the law, many become confused and think that the law is bad, that the law is somehow part of the sin problem.

**Read Romans 7:7,10-11, 14.** *What is the relationship between the law and sin? According to verse 12, "the law is holy....just, and good," and verse 14 said that "the law is spiritual."* So, the law can't be sinful or bad. But, the law exposes our sin and guilt (see **verses 7** and **10**).

*What do these verses also tell us about the impossibility of being saved by the law? Verse 11 shows how sin can deceive us into thinking that we can simply obey the commandments and be righteous. But, can one do that on human power?*

**Read Romans 7:11** again. *Why can't we do it on human strength?*

**Read Romans 7:14** again. We simply are slaves to sin until we experience Jesus, death to sin, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Read the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph of the narrative ("Two crucial points...").

Some try to say the law is at fault, is impossible to keep, or is no longer necessary. Yet, Paul's "argument functions on the assumption that the law is still binding, because it's the law that points out the reality of sin and the resulting need of the gospel." Recite Romans 7:7. Paul says that the law is needed.

**Read Romans 7:13.** *What is Paul saying about the law and why it is still necessary?* The law is essential to show sin in contrast to holiness so that it can be seen how terrible sin really is.

Read the last paragraph of the narrative.

If desired, Ask the question in the box at the bottom of the page.

## TUESDAY: "From Sabbath to Sunday"

People make various arguments against the law, in particular against the Sabbath. Some argue that the law has been done away with, while some argue that not being under law but under grace means the law no longer matters. Others argue that the seventh-day Sabbath has been replaced by the first day, Sunday, in honor of the resurrection of Jesus.

Read or paraphrase the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph of the narrative.

After the crucifixion and on the day of Christ's resurrection, the disciples were assembled.

**Read John 20:18-21.** *What reason does this text give for the disciples' being assembled in that room? What do these verses say about whether it was a worship service in honor of the resurrection of Jesus, as some claim? They gathered together for fear. It's not a gathering for worship. Jesus appeared to them to comfort, encourage, and to remind them of the gospel commission. There's nothing about changing the day of worship.*

**Read Acts 20:6-7.** *What, if anything, in these verses indicates that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday, the first day of the week? If coming together on the first day to break bread was the communion service, this passage might present a challenge. However, Acts 2:46, says the early*

believers broke bread every day showing that it was just eating together not a worship service. In these verses Paul discussed (the Greek better supports a discussion than preaching a sermon) important things because it was the only time left to do so since he was leaving the next day. This meeting was the people's last chance to be with Paul. It was a night time farewell meeting rather than a worship service.

**Read 1 Corinthians 16:1-2.** *Outside of the fact that they were to store up offerings at home on the first day of the week, what does this text teach about any change of the Sabbath to Sunday?* This verse doesn't even describe a gathering at all. Some read into it that an offering is being collected in church, but "**lay by him in store**" literally means in the Greek, "treasuring up" or "storing up" as in "a receptacle or container" or place "in the house."  
Paraphrase or read the final paragraph of the narrative.

WEDNESDAY: "The Seventh Day in the New Testament"

**What about the Old Testament?** Many think the OT only pertains to the Jews so doesn't count. *Are there OT verses about the Sabbath that are not about the Jews?* Yes!

**Gen. 2:2-3** The Sabbath was established in creation week for all mankind more than 3000 years before there was a Jew.

**Ex. 20:11.** The reason for keeping the Sabbath commandment was to honor God's work of creation. It shows that we accept that only He is God and has the right to be God. He created all of us not just the Jews.

**Is. 56:6-7.** Isaiah prophesied that foreigners would become Sabbath-keepers, follow the LORD, and come to worship at God's house of prayer. Clearly the Sabbath was meant for more than the Jews.

**Is. 66:22-23.** When God recreates the new earth (after the second coming and the 1000 years of Revelation 20), all the saved will worship from one Sabbath to another. *If the redeemed will be keeping the Sabbath into eternity future, how could it ever have made sense to think it was changed?*

**New Testament:** **Read Luke 4:14-16.** *What does this passage tell us about the seventh-day Sabbath before Christ's death?* Jesus customarily went to worship in the synagogues on Sabbath. Jesus was a Sabbath-keeper.

**Read Luke 23:55-56.** *What does this passage tell us about the seventh-day Sabbath after Christ's death?* To answer, paraphrase the middle paragraph.

**Read Acts 13: 42, 44; Acts 17:1-2; Acts 18:4, 11.** *What evidence do these verses give for the keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath?*

In **Acts 13:42, 44**, even the Gentiles show that they understood that keeping the Sabbath was what the followers of Jesus did.

**Acts 17:1-2** explains that it was Paul's custom to go to the synagogue on Sabbath recording three times in particular in which he did in Thessalonica.

In **Acts 18:4, 11**, we see that Paul faithfully taught in the synagogue in Corinth on Sabbath for a

year and six months (that's over 80 Sabbaths).

Read the next to the last paragraph of the narrative.

Ask the question in the box at the bottom of the page. Possible answers: One could just let them read the Bible verses and/or talk about love as obedience while remembering that argument is useless.

THURSDAY: "The Attempted Change of the Sabbath"

Read the first short paragraph that ends with a question. Answer: This is because the Sabbath is the focal point of Satan's attack. Prophecy shows this.

Read or share highlights from the 2nd paragraph.

**Read Daniel 7:23-25.** *What do these verses teach that can help us to understand the origins of Sunday keeping?* The little horn power would try to change God's law on time – the Sabbath.

Share highlights from the two middle paragraphs.

Recall/summarize just the basic high points **Rev. 13** and **Dan. 7**. *What similar imagery and parallel traits are used in these texts that help us to understand last-day events?* The beast of **Rev. 13** and the little horn of **Dan. 7** share the same characteristics and are the same power. Both persecute God's people. Both speak great words against God. Both are led by a man. Both rule for the same 1260 years.

Read or highlight the final paragraph.

Ask the question in the box at the bottom of the page. Answer: It's a call to return to worship God as the Creator as the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment says. It's a call to return to the Sabbath.

Conclusion: From Friday's page.

Read the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph. It's a quotation from *The Great Controversy*, pp. 53-54.

Close with the ideas from the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph.