

Central Study Hour – Sabbath School Lesson Notes

“The Least of These”: Lesson 6, “Worship the Creator”

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read the title. *Is worship limited to what we do in church and family worship?*

Does our memory text have any thing to do with worship?

Read the Memory verse.

Share highlights from the 1st paragraph.

Read the 2nd paragraph.

SUNDAY: “Idolatry and Oppression”

Share highlights from the first 2 paragraphs.

Read the 3rd paragraph.

Read Psalm 115;2, 4-8.

What crucial points are made in these verses? Idols are useless, even fake; and those obsessed with them tend to also become useless (even fake), unable to be much help to others.

Share highlights from the last paragraph.

Read the box and question at the bottom of the page. For some people money is their god. We can see how that has often made people less considerate for the poor and needy. Millions of people today are so focused on entertainment figures; Hollywood actors and actresses, popular musicians, and sports stars, that they tend to become as self-centered and morally deficient as are their idols. The needs of others are so easily overlooked when we have idols of any kind.

MONDAY: “A Reason to Worship”

Why do we worship God?

What reasons did they have to worship God in the Old Testament?

Read Psalm 146:5-10.

Vs. 6 – He is the Creator, the source of life.

Vs. 7 – His judgment helps the oppressed, provides food for the hungry, freedom for prisoners.

Vs. 8 – He opens blind eyes, etc.

Vs. 9 – He relieves widows and orphans, etc.

Read Deut. 10:17-22.

Vs. 17 – Because of the greatness of God.

Vs. 18 – He is fair to orphans, widows, and foreigners.

Vss. 20-22 – They feared Him, served Him, and praised Him because He multiplied Israel.

Psalm 101:1 – They worshipped Him because He was merciful and exercised fair judgment.

Read the 2nd paragraph of the narrative (“Such reasons for worship....”).

Share highlights of the final 2 paragraphs.

Read the question in the box at the bottom of the page (This can be just for reflection).

TUESDAY: "Religious oppressors"

Leaders and priests of Israel and Judah often were religious oppressors in Old Testament times.

Read the 2nd paragraph ("Amos described....").

Read Amos 5:21-24. *What was the Lord telling these religious people about their rituals?*

God couldn't accept them; in fact, He despised their ceremonies.

Why couldn't God accept their rituals?

Verse 24 indicates that there was a lack of fair judgment in the land, a lack of righteousness.

Read the 3rd paragraph of the narrative ("Through His prophets....").

Read Isaiah 1:2, 4-5, 10-14. God says that He is repulsed with their sacrifices, burning of incense, calling of assemblies, and their feast days.

Why? Who gave them all these services and ceremonies? God did!

So, why does He seem so disgusted with it all to the point where He says that He won't even hear their Prayers?

Read Isaiah 1:15-17. They are oppressing the fatherless and widows even to the point of death (leaving them to die premature deaths from extreme neglect).

Read Micah 6:6-8. [Comment as needed. The question brought out in verse 7(a) is, does God want 1000's of sacrifices as though He must be appeased like the pagan Gods. If they have a view of God like this, then the next question in verse 7(b) is, does God want my child to be sacrificed like the pagan gods demand to win favor. This was done in Micah's time so these are not ridiculous questions. People actually struggled with such horrific thinking. Of course, verse 8 tells what God wants most of all....even from us today – to treat people right!]

Could we be guilty of going through the form of religion; going to church, giving offerings, singing our songs; and yet fail to do justly, fail to love mercy, fail to help the downtrodden, and fail to walk humbly with God?

WEDNESDAY: "A Way to Worship"

Read the 1st paragraph.

Read Isaiah 58:1-5.

What has gone wrong in the relationship between God and His people?

While they enjoy the forms of worship and fasting, they "exact all [their] labors" meaning they oppress others. Their fasting seems to be for show and causes "strife and debate." They have a completely wrong spirit and purpose for fasting. God suggests a different approach to fasting.

Read Is. 58:6-7.

What kind of fast does God suggest would be more righteous and satisfactory?

This is actually a fast from selfishness and seeking their own pleasure and honor, and instead do deeds of benevolence for others.

Share highlights from the 2nd and 3rd paragraphs of the narrative as desired ("As we have....").

Is there any personal benefit from all this generosity and kindness?

Read Is. 58:8-12. *What does God promise for doing the kind of fast described in verses 6-7?*

Vs. 8 - Good health, good reputation. **Vs. 9** - Answered prayers.

Vs. 10 – People will look to you. **Vs. 11** - The Lord will guide you always and you will prosper.

Vs. 12 – You will be a healer and restorer in all the ways of God.

What surprising way does the chapter end?

Read Is. 58:13-14.

Read the final paragraph of the narrative.

Read the Quotation from Welfare Ministry, P. 29 from Friday's page.

THURSDAY: "Mercy and Faithfulness"

"Jesus lived a life of caring and service." The religious leaders condemned Jesus, but they also received His harshest rebukes. *Why?*

Read the 2nd half of paragraph two ("Like the religious people...").

Read Mark 12:38-40.

Does Jesus' comment that they "devour widows' houses" seem out of place in this list, or is that the point Jesus is trying to make? He's pointing out all their outward religious devotion while they were evil in their treatment of widows.

How would you explain why "these shall receive greater damnation"? The religious leaders were worse than the despised common sinners.

Share highlights from the final two paragraphs as desired.

Read the question from the box at the bottom of the page. The truth must come out in our actions not just be in our heads as correct understanding. We must understand the we really don't have the full truth until it is lived out for others.

Close the lesson:

Read the quotation from *Testimony Treasures*, vol. 2, p. 255 (It's found in the Teachers' Comments on page 83).

Read the sentence just before the quotation ("If we have truly worshipped...").