

Sabbath School Lesson #13 – The Tabernacle – 20-26 September 2025

Christ is soon to end His ministration in the heavenly Tabernacle, which ministry was typified by the work begun in earthly Tabernacle. In the earthly, when “the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle”, no man could enter, even Moses was not able to enter. When the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle or Temple, in the type, there was no ministration (Exodus 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11). And so, it will be in the antitype (Revelation 15:8). In Revelation 15:8 we behold the scene of the end of Christ’s ministry; the Tabernacle is filled with the glory of God, and no man could enter. The prototype of this scene is found in Exodus 40:34-35: “Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.” This was at the commencement of the typical work here on earth, as the antitype scene described in Revelation 15 is at the close of the real work in heaven. Thus this work, so far as it relates to man, is bounded at its beginning and close with an overpowering manifestation of the glory of God. The great God takes sole possession of His own dwelling-place at the conclusion of Christ’s ministry, and thus sets His seal to the work which has been accomplished therein.

Sunday: The Sabbath of the Lord – Is keeping the Sabbath legalistic, trying to work our way to heaven? Let us discuss the Sabbath as a symbol of Redemption and righteousness by faith. Putting aside what others think, we do well, as Seventh-day Adventists, to know that perfect Sabbath rest is only by the Spirit of Christ in us (Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6). Only those who are spiritual can keep the Sabbath. So long as Adam was led by the Spirit, he enjoyed perfect Sabbath rest; but as soon as he sinned, he lost the rest. But although the curse upon the earth causes weariness of body, the Sabbath remains from Eden, the pledge and seal of spiritual rest. The abstaining from all secular work and our own pleasure on the seventh day – from everything by which we could personally profit – is simply in recognition of the Lord as our Creator and upholder of all things – the one by whose power we live. Sabbath keeping involves rest from our own work on the seventh day, but he who does no more than this does not keep the Sabbath of the Lord. As the Sabbath was the seal of a perfect creation, so it is the seal of a perfect new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The Pharisees accused Christ of breaking the Sabbath because He healed on Sabbath. They failed to see that the healing of bodily infirmities on the Sabbath day was an exhibition of the working of the Word that creates, and that upholds all things. The Word that creates also cleanses from sin, since His works “are verity and judgment, and are done in truth and uprightness” (Psalm 111:7). The Word that gives life gives perfect life; the Word that heals diseases also forgives iniquities (see Matthew 9:1-8); and so the healing of disease on the Sabbath day should, more than on any other day, reveal the loving kindness of our Creator.

God works constantly, but by His Word – the Word by which He healed the sick. Such work pertains to the Sabbath day. But this work is not predicated on personal gain to God; it is gratuitous on His part. It is done at great sacrifice in that “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16) even to heal and save lost mankind. Thus we are guarded against deceiving ourselves with the thought that certain work which we very much desire to see accomplished, in which we shall derive personal gain, directly (such as salary) or indirectly (such as job security), is a work of necessity. If any secular work can by any possibility benefit us – if we can possibly derive from it any personal gain – it is not a work of necessity. If you worked in a conventional hospital on Sabbath because the security of your job requires so, claim to be healing on Sabbath, it is not a work of mercy, but of selfishness, even though it is lawful in itself if performed on some secular day. But any work that has in it no possible element of selfishness, and from which we cannot in the remotest manner, or to the least degree, derive any personal gain, but which is wholly for the benefit of others, is lawful on the Sabbath day. In doing such work, cheerfully, we show ourselves to be children of God who bears the burdens of mankind because He cares for them, and loves them.

Moreover, even if a Sabbath-keeper were to work in a conventional hospital on Sabbath without deriving any personal gain, but engaged in dispensing drugs that “enfeebles the system, making it more susceptible to disease” (5T 311.1), he would not keep the Sabbath

of the Lord. "It is the Lord's purpose that His method of healing without drugs shall be brought into prominence in every large city through our medical institutions" (9T 168.4). Christ healed by miracles, but "God's servants today could not work by means of miracles, because spurious works of healing, claiming to be divine, will be wrought" (LDE 169.2); He "has commissioned us to carry forward the medical missionary work that He began; in this work, men and women suffering from diseases are to be treated without drugs" (CH 393.1).

Keeping the Lord's Sabbath involves adopting the Lord's health laws. The apostle Paul tells about men "having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Timothy 4:2), and there are very many who have got into that sad condition. Many will feel condemned by the truth that "excessive indulgence in eating and drinking is sin" (CH 50.3) and that "tea and coffee drinking is a sin" (CD 425.3), but have no notion of leaving off their evil ways. So long as conscience makes one uncomfortable over sins committed, there is hope of repentance and salvation; but what if you are offered a drug that could relieve you of all compunctions of conscience, while still "fulfilling the desires of the flesh" (Ephesians 2:3)? Many Sabbath-keepers take that approach; they neglect the Lord's health laws, they sin by defiling the body temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:17; 6:19), they suffer pain, then they take drugs to deaden that pain, so that they can continue in sin with impunity. Many did so in ignorance that "God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). For Christ the Lord of the Sabbath to reproduce His observance in us, we must not defile His body temple.

Monday: Offerings and the Spirit – Read Exodus 35:4-36:7; what lessons do we learn here? The people were moved by the Spirit of God to give generously for the building of the temple. The workers, like Bezaleel, were filled with the Spirit of God. No matter what the work may be, we need to be qualified for it by the reception of His Spirit. When the disciples were filled by the Spirit at Pentecost, there were converted the same day three thousand.

Tuesday: The Tabernacle Built – Read Exodus 36:8-39:31. "No language can describe the glory of the scene presented within the sanctuary – the gold-plated walls reflecting the light from the golden candlestick, the brilliant hues of the richly embroidered curtains with their shining angels, the table, and the altar of incense, glittering with gold; beyond the second veil the sacred ark, with its mystic cherubim, and above it the holy Shekinah, the visible manifestation of Jehovah's presence; all but a dim reflection of the glories of the temple of God in heaven, the great center of the work for man's redemption" {PP 349}. "A period of about half a year was occupied in the building of the tabernacle. When it was completed, Moses examined all the work of the builders, comparing it with the pattern shown him in the mount and the directions he had received from God. "As the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them." With eager interest the multitudes of Israel crowded around to look upon the sacred structure. While they were contemplating the scene with reverent satisfaction, the pillar of cloud floated over the sanctuary and, descending, enveloped it. "And the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." There was a revealing of the divine majesty, and for a time even Moses could not enter. With deep emotion the people beheld the token that the work of their hands was accepted" {ibid}.

Wednesday: God's Presence in the Tabernacle – Read Exodus 40:1-38; how did the Israelite discern God's presence? Through the glory that led them. "The Lord directed the Israelites in all their travels through the wilderness. When it was for the good of the people, and the glory of God, that they should pitch their tents in a certain place, and there abide, God signified his will to them by the pillar of cloud resting low directly over the tabernacle. And there it remained until God would have them journey again. Then the cloud of glory was lifted up high above the tabernacle, and then they journeyed again" – EG White {1SP 275.2}.

Thursday: Jesus Tabernacled with Humanity – "God commanded Moses for Israel, "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8), and He abode in the sanctuary, in the midst of His people. Through all their weary wandering in the desert, the symbol of His presence was with them. So Christ set up His tabernacle in the midst of our human encampment. He pitched His tent by the side of the tents of men, that He might dwell among us, and make us familiar with His divine character and life. "The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth." John 1:14, R. V." – EG White {DA 23.3}.