

Ellen G. White Estate

MY JOURNEY TO LIFE

SABBATH

Finding peace and relationships in a chaotic world!

STEP 5 OF 28



My Journey to Life, Step 5

Foreword

My Journey to Life will give you the keys for finding peace of mind, harmony of body, and success in relationships. Every step will transform your outlook on life as you unpack each lesson. We pray they will help you to fall in love with the greatest Teacher this world has ever known. Together, let's walk the pathway step-by-step to a new life in Jesus.

Preface

Have you ever wondered where real peace and rest can be found? At creation God gave us a special weekly gift—a 24-hour period to spend reconnecting with Him, the true Power Source. This gift is especially valuable in our stressful and chaotic world. Over time, however, society has lost the significance of this special day. We continue our journey learning about the history of the Sabbath and its eternal relevance.

Step Five—The Sabbath

Finding peace and nurturing relationships in a chaotic world: “The gracious Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God’s unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God’s kingdom. The Sabbath is God’s perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God’s creative and redemptive acts.” —*Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, p. 287

Bible Discovery: Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Leviticus 23:32; Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Isaiah 56:5, 6; 58:13, 14; Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Matthew 12:1-12; Mark 1:32; Luke 4:16; Hebrews 4:1-11

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 349.3

1. What is the Sabbath? The Sabbath is the memorial of God’s creation of Planet Earth. Genesis, the first book of the Bible, states that God created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh day (Saturday). The Hebrew word for Sabbath is ***shabbat***, meaning “to rest from labor” or “day of rest.” God also blessed and sanctified it making the day holy. After Adam and

Eve sinned, God intended that true Sabbath observance would set His people apart as His forever.

Bible Discovery: Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 16:23; 31:16, 17; Ezekiel 20:20

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48.1

2. For whom was the Sabbath made? The Sabbath was made by God for all people, in all places, in all times. It was given in Eden as a memorial of Creation long before there was a Jew or other nationality. God intended the Sabbath to be a perpetual special day in which we can enter a deeper relationship with Him.

Bible Discovery: Isaiah 56:2, 6, 7; 66:22, 23; Mark 2:27; Hebrews 4:9-11

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 307.2

3. When does the Sabbath begin and end? According to the sacred Scriptures, the Sabbath begins at sundown Friday evening and ends at sundown Saturday evening. Every person is privileged to enter a deeper relationship with Jesus during the hallowed hours of the Sabbath. When we love and obey Jesus, we become part of His family, receiving the blessings of the ancient covenant between God and Abraham! He especially longs to bless us with His presence during the Sabbath hours.

Bible Discovery: Leviticus 23:32; Nehemiah 13:19; Galatians 3:28, 29

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, pp. 356.1; 359.1

4. What is the purpose of the Sabbath? The Sabbath symbolizes our rest and confidence in our Creator and Savior, Jesus. We trust Him for our salvation, and not our own righteousness. The purpose of the Sabbath is not to save us, but to show our gratitude to Jesus for His marvelous grace! To worship on the seventh day is to accept the authority of our Creator Lord, who commanded the day be kept. Jesus invites us into His rest on the Sabbath, freeing us from the stress and burdens of our work week. Jesus rested at creation and in the tomb both as a culmination of His creative and redemptive work.

Note: The Sabbath teaches us righteousness by faith because we rest in Jesus' work, rather than trust in our works.

Bible Discovery: Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15; John 14:15; Romans 3:21-26; Hebrews 4:4-6, 9, 10

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 437.2

5. How should the Sabbath be kept? Jesus reserves some of His best promises for those who make God the center of their thoughts, words, and even conversation on His holy day. The Sabbath is not a day for buying, selling, farm or housework, competitive sports or business transactions. Rather, it is a day to center our minds on God and His amazing love and power, cultivating our relationship with Him in joyful celebration. Focusing on heavenly themes could include corporate worship in church, private worship in nature, spending time in prayer, Scripture study and spiritual song, visiting the sick or lonely, and enjoying family time.

Bible Discovery: Exodus 16:23; Nehemiah 13:15-22; Isaiah 58:13, 14; Mark 3:1-6

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 355.3

6. How do we know today's seventh day is the Sabbath of Jesus' time? Here are four ways we can know that Saturday today is the Sabbath of the Bible: (1) Historical records kept by the Jewish people through the centuries indicate they have observed the same weekly Sabbath as their ancestors; (2) Jesus was crucified on the preparation day (Friday); His followers rested as commanded on the Sabbath (Saturday); Jesus rose from the dead on the first day (Sunday); (3) In over 106 languages in the world, the word for the seventh day is "Sabbath"; (4) Leading astronomers observe that the weekly cycle has never changed. The Royal Naval Observatory in the United States and the Royal Greenwich Observatory in England both affirm a perpetual weekly cycle.

Bible Discovery: Luke 23:54-56; 24:1; Hebrews 13:8

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 630.4

7. Which day did Jesus and His disciples observe? Jesus was a faithful seventh-day Sabbath keeper. In fact, Scripture refers to the seventh-day Sabbath as the Lord's Day. Jesus expected His disciples to still be keeping the Sabbath at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., an event thirty-five years after His death. After His resurrection, Jesus' disciples continued to observe the seventh-day Sabbath.

Bible Discovery: Matthew 12:8; Luke 4:16; 23:54, 56; Acts 13:42-44; 15:21; 16:13

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 283.4

Question 8: If Jesus kept the seventh-day Sabbath, and His disciples continued to observe Sabbath after His resurrection, why do most Christians today observe Sunday? Many Christians today believe they are observing Sunday in honor of Jesus' resurrection. However, Jesus established baptism to symbolize His resurrection and the Lord's Supper to

commemorate His death. There is not one instance in the Bible that replaces God’s Sabbath with Sunday worship. Sunday was adopted into Christianity from pagan Rome’s sun worship and human traditions, but never by the command of God. Scripture predicted that the “man of sin” would cause apostasy to come into the church, through an attempt to alter the law of God.

The Roman Catholic church accepts responsibility for changing the day of worship from the seventh-day Sabbath to the first day of the week, Sunday. The quote below is from the Catholic Catechism:

Question: “Why do some observe Sunday instead of Saturday?”

Answer: “‘We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.’”—Reverend Peter Geiermann, C.S.S.R., *The Convert’s Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, 2nd edition, 1910, p. 50.

The Catholic Church clearly states, “You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify.”—Cardinal Gibbons, *Faith of Our Fathers*, pp. 111, 112.

Bible Discovery: Daniel 7:25; 8:12; Acts 20:28-31; Romans 6:1-6; 1 Corinthians 11:26; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 446.2-3

9. Does it really matter on what day we worship? It is true that those devoted to Jesus Christ will worship Him every day. However, there is only one day which Jesus sanctified, or set apart as holy. To honor the sanctity of the seventh day is to accept the authority of our Creator God, rather than personal preferences or the traditions of humanity. Satan has set himself against the Ten Commandment law of God, particularly the Sabbath commandment. He has raised up a counterfeit day of worship through apostate religion. God calls on His people to repair the breach in God’s wall of truth by keeping His Sabbath. Will we be the servant of God or man’s? Whose day will you worship on?

Bible Discovery: Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:12, 13; Acts 5:29; Romans 6:16

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 353.4

10. In what way is the observance of the fourth commandment a sign? The Sabbath is a sign of God’s creative power—both His power in creating Planet Earth and His power in recreating our hearts in His image. In the last tumultuous days of Earth’s history, the Sabbath will be a sign and seal, separating those who accept the God who created the heavens and earth from those who receive the Mark of the Beast. Revelation’s most urgent appeal to humanity is a call to worship

our Maker on the day He has set apart as holy. The Sabbath is the seal of the salvation we have by grace through faith in Christ. Thus, the Sabbath is both a sign of God's creation as well as a sign of God's redemption (Deuteronomy 5:12-15).

Bible Discovery: Ezekiel 20:20; Mark 7:6-8; Ephesians 2:8; Revelation 4:11; 14:6, 7, 12

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 352.1

11. Weren't the commandments nailed to the cross and replaced with the New Covenant? The ceremonies, sacrifices and regulations which pre-figured Christ's sacrifice on the cross were fulfilled at Christ's death and ceased to have significance after the Cross. In contrast, the Ten Commandments, written in stone by the very finger of God, are eternal and immutable. The seventh-day Sabbath is not a shadow of things to come, but rather a weekly perpetual reminder of the relationship God hopes to have with His created beings. Under the new covenant, believers keep the Sabbath as a loving response to God's grace. Now the commandments are written on the heart; the motivation for obedience is love!

Bible Discovery: Deuteronomy 4:13; Matthew 5:18; John 14:15; Romans 7:12; Hebrews 8:10; 10:19-22

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 447.1; *12LtMs, Manuscript 78*, 1897, par. 47

12. Is the Sabbath to be a day of joy or somberness? Jesus longs to heal our brokenness on the Sabbath and bring us peace. The Sabbath is a celebration of Christ's finished work of creation and His finished work of salvation. It is a day of joy! The dark trials, loneliness, or anxiety of the previous week dissipate under the sunshine of Jesus' love. The precious hours of the Sabbath provide an opportunity to explore the depths of that love. The Sabbath is a celebration of relationship with God Himself!

Bible Discovery: Deuteronomy 28:1, 2; Psalm 119:2, 18; Isaiah 58:13; Revelation 22:14

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, pp. 584.2; 585.1

Reflection...

God requires us to keep His holy Sabbath as a reminder that true rest is found in Him. Each week as we celebrate the Sabbath, we declare that He is the one who makes us holy. We rest in Him and His ability to transform us into His likeness. In His great kindness He has given us the Sabbath to rest from all our work and it is meant to be a holy and joyous occasion as we celebrate Him as our beneficent Creator.

Next Step...

When Jesus ascended to heaven, He left His followers with a promise: “If I go, I will return” (John 14:3). When will He come back? Did Jesus leave any indicators what to look for and how to be ready when He comes? Our next study guide will answer these and many more questions regarding Jesus’ second coming.

Discussion Questions

1. How could seventh-day Sabbath observance bring you closer to Jesus?
2. What are the links between Creation and the Sabbath?
3. How would you respond to the argument that the Sabbath was nailed to the cross?

Further Reading

Official Adventist Website: <https://www.adventist.org/the-sabbath>

Contact Information

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Request a personal Bible study: <https://www.bibleschools.com/en/personal-studies>

Visit your local Seventh-day Adventist Church: <https://www.adventistlocator.org>

Online prayer room: <https://www.wepray.mobi>